

Title 18 – Chapter 1 – Understanding the Problem

United States Code - Title 18 - Part I - Chapter 115

§2381. Treason

Whoever, owing allegiance to the United States, levies war against them or adheres to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort within the United States or elsewhere, is guilty of treason and shall suffer death, or shall be imprisoned not less than five years and fined under this title but not less than \$10,000; and shall be incapable of holding any office under the United States.

§2382. Misprision of Treason

Whoever, owing allegiance to the United States and having knowledge of the commission of any treason against them, conceals and does not, as soon as may be, disclose and make known the same to the President or to some judge of the United States, or to the governor or to some judge or justice of a particular State, is guilty of misprision of treason and shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than seven years, or both.

§2383. Rebellion or Insurrection

Whoever incites, sets on foot, assists, or engages in any rebellion or insurrection against the authority of the United States or the laws thereof, or gives aid or comfort thereto, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both; and shall be incapable of holding any office under the United States.

§2384. Seditious Conspiracy

If two or more persons in any State or Territory, or in any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, conspire to overthrow, put down, or to destroy by force the Government of the United States, or to levy war against them, or to oppose by force the authority thereof, or by force to prevent, hinder, or delay the execution of any law of the United States, or by force to seize, take, or possess any property of the United States contrary to the authority thereof, they shall each be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

§2385. Advocating overthrow of Government

Whoever knowingly or willfully advocates, abets, advises, or teaches the duty, necessity, desirability, or propriety of overthrowing or destroying the government of the United States or the government of any State, Territory, District or Possession thereof, or the government of any political subdivision therein, by force or violence, or by the assassination of any officer of any such government; or

Whoever, with intent to cause the overthrow or destruction of any such government, prints, publishes, edits, issues, circulates, sells, distributes, or publicly displays any written or printed matter advocating, advising, or teaching the duty, necessity, desirability, or propriety of overthrowing or destroying any government in the United States by force or violence, or attempts to do so; or

Whoever organizes or helps or attempts to organize any society, group, or assembly of persons who teach, advocate, or encourage the overthrow or destruction of any such government by force or violence; or becomes or is a member of, or affiliates with, any such society, group, or assembly of persons, knowing the purposes thereof- Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both, and shall be ineligible for employment by the United States or any department or agency thereof, for the five years next following his conviction.

If two or more persons conspire to commit any offense named in this section, each shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both, and shall be ineligible for employment by the United States or any department or agency thereof, for the five years next following his conviction.

As used in this section, the terms “organizes” and “organize”, with respect to any society, group, or assembly of persons, include the recruiting of new members, the forming of new units, and the regrouping or expansion of existing clubs, classes, and other units of such society, group, or assembly of persons.

§2386. Registration of certain organizations

(A) For the purposes of this section:

“Attorney General” means the Attorney General of the United States;

“Organization” means any group, club, league, society, committee, association, political party, or combination of individuals, whether incorporated or otherwise, but such term shall not include any corporation, association, community chest, fund, or foundation, organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes;

“Political activity” means any activity the purpose or aim of which, or one of the purposes or aims of which, is the control by force or overthrow of the Government of the United States or a political subdivision thereof, or any State or political subdivision thereof;

An organization is engaged in “civilian military activity” if:

(1) it gives instruction to, or prescribes instruction for, its members in the use of firearms or other weapons or any substitute therefor, or military or naval science; or

(2) it receives from any other organization or from any individual instruction in military or naval science; or

(3) it engages in any military or naval maneuvers or activities; or

(4) it engages, either with or without arms, in drills or parades of a military or naval character; or

(5) it engages in any other form of organized activity which in the opinion of the Attorney General constitutes preparation for military action;

An organization is "subject to foreign control" if:

(a) it solicits or accepts financial contributions, loans, or support of any kind, directly or indirectly, from, or is affiliated directly or indirectly with, a foreign government or a political subdivision thereof, or an agent, agency, or instrumentality of a foreign government or political subdivision thereof, or a political party in a foreign country, or an international political organization; or

(b) its policies, or any of them, are determined by or at the suggestion of, or in collaboration with, a foreign government or political subdivision thereof, or an agent, agency, or instrumentality of a foreign government or a political subdivision thereof, or a political party in a foreign country, or an international political organization.

(B)

(1) The following organizations shall be required to register with the Attorney General:

Every organization subject to foreign control which engages in political activity;

Every organization which engages both in civilian military activity and in political activity;

Every organization subject to foreign control which engages in civilian military activity;
and

Every organization, the purpose or aim of which, or one of the purposes or aims of which, is the establishment, control, conduct, seizure, or overthrow of a government or subdivision thereof by the use of force, violence, military measures, or threats of any one or more of the foregoing.

Every such organization shall register by filing with the Attorney General, on such forms and in such detail as the Attorney General may by rules and regulations prescribe, a registration statement containing the information and documents prescribed in subsection (B)(3) and shall within thirty days after the expiration of each period of six months succeeding the filing of such registration statement, file with the Attorney General, on such forms and in such detail as the Attorney General may by rules and regulations

prescribe, a supplemental statement containing such information and documents as may be necessary to make the information and documents previously filed under this section accurate and current with respect to such preceding six months' period. Every statement required to be filed by this section shall be subscribed, under oath, by all of the officers of the organization.

(2) This section shall not require registration or the filing of any statement with the Attorney General by:

(a) The armed forces of the United States; or

(b) The organized militia or National Guard of any State, Territory, District, or possession of the United States; or

(c) Any law-enforcement agency of the United States or of any Territory, District or possession thereof, or of any State or political subdivision of a State, or of any agency or instrumentality of one or more States; or

(d) Any duly established diplomatic mission or consular office of a foreign government which is so recognized by the Department of State; or

(e) Any nationally recognized organization of persons who are veterans of the armed forces of the United States, or affiliates of such organizations.

(3) Every registration statement required to be filed by any organization shall contain the following information and documents:

(a) The name and post-office address of the organization in the United States, and the names and addresses of all branches, chapters, and affiliates of such organization;

(b) The name, address, and nationality of each officer, and of each person who performs the functions of an officer, of the organization, and of each branch, chapter, and affiliate of the organization;

(c) The qualifications for membership in the organization;

(d) The existing and proposed aims and purposes of the organization, and all the means by which these aims or purposes are being attained or are to be attained;

(e) The address or addresses of meeting places of the organization, and of each branch, chapter, or affiliate of the organization, and the times of meetings;

(f) The name and address of each person who has contributed any money, dues, property, or other thing of value to the organization or to any branch, chapter, or affiliate of the organization;

(g) A detailed statement of the assets of the organization, and of each branch, chapter, and affiliate of the organization, the manner in which such assets were acquired, and a detailed statement of the liabilities and income of the organization and of each branch, chapter, and affiliate of the organization;

(h) A detailed description of the activities of the organization, and of each chapter, branch, and affiliate of the organization;

(i) A description of the uniforms, badges, insignia, or other means of identification prescribed by the organization, and worn or carried by its officers or members, or any of such officers or members;

(j) A copy of each book, pamphlet, leaflet, or other publication or item of written, printed, or graphic matter issued or distributed directly or indirectly by the organization, or by any chapter, branch, or affiliate of the organization, or by any of the members of the organization under its authority or within its knowledge, together with the name of its author or authors and the name and address of the publisher;

(k) A description of all firearms or other weapons owned by the organization, or by any chapter, branch, or affiliate of the organization, identified by the manufacturer's number thereon;

(l) In case the organization is subject to foreign control, the manner in which it is so subject;

(m) A copy of the charter, articles of association, constitution, bylaws, rules, regulations, agreements, resolutions, and all other instruments relating to the organization, powers, and purposes of the organization and to the powers of the officers of the organization and of each chapter, branch, and affiliate of the organization; and

(n) Such other information and documents pertinent to the purposes of this section as the Attorney General may from time to time require.

All statements filed under this section shall be public records and open to public examination and inspection at all reasonable hours under such rules and regulations as the Attorney General may prescribe.

(C) The Attorney General is authorized at any time to make, amend, and rescind such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section, including rules and regulations governing the statements required to be filed.

(D) Whoever violates any of the provisions of this section shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

Whoever in a statement filed pursuant to this section willfully makes any false statement or willfully omits to state any fact which is required to be stated, or which is necessary to

make the statements made not misleading, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

§2387. Activities affecting armed forces generally

(a) Whoever, with intent to interfere with, impair, or influence the loyalty, morale, or discipline of the military or naval forces of the United States:

(1) advises, counsels, urges, or in any manner causes or attempts to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the military or naval forces of the United States; or

(2) distributes or attempts to distribute any written or printed matter which advises, counsels, or urges insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the military or naval forces of the United States-

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both, and shall be ineligible for employment by the United States or any department or agency thereof, for the five years next following his conviction.

(b) For the purposes of this section, the term "military or naval forces of the United States" includes the Army of the United States, the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve of the United States; and, when any merchant vessel is commissioned in the Navy or is in the service of the Army or the Navy, includes the master, officers, and crew of such vessel.

§2388. Activities affecting armed forces during war

(a) Whoever, when the United States is at war, willfully makes or conveys false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States or to promote the success of its enemies; or

Whoever, when the United States is at war, willfully causes or attempts to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or willfully obstructs the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or the United States, or attempts to do so-
Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than twenty years, or both.

(b) If two or more persons conspire to violate subsection (a) of this section and one or more such persons do any act to effect the object of the conspiracy, each of the parties to such conspiracy shall be punished as provided in said subsection (a).

(c) Whoever harbors or conceals any person who he knows, or has reasonable grounds to believe or suspect, has committed, or is about to commit, an offense under this section, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

(d) This section shall apply within the admiralty and maritime jurisdiction of the United States, and on the high seas, as well as within the United States.

§2389. Recruiting for service against United States

Whoever recruits soldiers or sailors within the United States, or in any place subject to the jurisdiction thereof, to engage in armed hostility against the same; or
Whoever opens within the United States, or in any place subject to the jurisdiction thereof, a recruiting station for the enlistment of such soldiers or sailors to serve in any manner in armed hostility against the United States-

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

§2390. Enlistment to serve against United States

Whoever enlists or is engaged within the United States or in any place subject to the jurisdiction thereof, with intent to serve in armed hostility against the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

§2391. Repealed.

That's what the law says. How it is interpreted is dependent upon Common Law, prior Case Law and the whims of Judges. It is also subject to the whims of the Attorney General of the United States of America. Under Patriot Act I and Patriot Act II, Title 18 is referred to many times. The system says that you're innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. It also says the following:

Amendment I.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III.

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII.

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX.

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

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Guilty or innocent, you'll be damned lucky to ever get a day in court, especially if you're just your average American. Say some Protestant White Guy in his 30's named Smith or Jones who the FBI suspects has done something wrong and they believe they have enough proof to arrest him or that not to arrest him would endanger the country.

What does the guy do?

1. The guy naturally denies everything because he didn't do anything wrong and has no idea what the FBI is talking about.
2. The guy believes in the Constitution and believes the FBI when they tell him that he has the right to remain silent and he does.

Either way, you know what is going to happen, don't you?

1. The FBI eventually realizes that they don't have enough to hold Smith or Jones or whatever his name is and lets him go.
2. Smith or Jones or whatever his name is rots in jail because he doesn't have any friends or relatives. He has no relatives because he was adopted by a couple (whose parents were all dead) and they were only children. And one night when they went out for dinner and they were smashed into by a drunk driver and both killed. He has no friends because he doesn't want any because he's a loner who doesn't happen to trust people very much.

He won't talk because he has a secret. It isn't much of a secret but it happens to be against the law, like maybe he has an illegal firearm because the 2nd Amendment doesn't really mean what it says and the state that he moved to doesn't permit you to own that type of firearm. To top it off, the guy doesn't have a pot to pee in or a window to throw it out of. I'll assume that the ACLU heard about the case and got our hero out of jail because they didn't like his rights being violated.

The ACLU is our nation's guardian of liberty. They work daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to every person in this country by the Constitution and laws of the United States. They see their job as to conserve America's original civic values - the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The American system of government is founded on two counterbalancing principles: that the majority of the people governs, through democratically elected representatives; and that the power even of a democratic majority must be limited, to ensure individual rights.

Majority power is limited by the Constitution's Bill of Rights, which consists of the original ten amendments ratified in 1791, plus the three post-Civil War amendments (the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth) and the Nineteenth Amendment (women's suffrage), adopted in 1920.

The mission of the ACLU is to preserve all of these protections and guarantees:

- Your First Amendment rights-freedom of speech, association and assembly. Freedom of the press, and freedom of religion supported by the strict separation of church and state.
- Your right to equal protection under the law - equal treatment regardless of race, sex, religion or national origin.
- Your right to due process - fair treatment by the government whenever the loss of your liberty or property is at stake.
- Your right to privacy - freedom from unwarranted government intrusion into your personal and private affairs.

That's the basis of this story. I can forget it or I can write it. I can make Mr. Smith or Jones or whatever his name is a good guy, a bad guy or anything you want him to be. He can be honest, dishonest or somewhere in between. For the sake of the story, I'll also assume that he did a hitch in the Army Infantry but didn't see any action.

Title 18 – Chapter 2 – Free at Last

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the South. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, 'My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.' And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania! Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado! Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California! But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia! Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee! Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be

able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

No doubt you recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech delivered from the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. The title was, *I Have A Dream*. 40 years later many Americans were still dreaming. After a flurry of court cases in the 1960's, King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, TN. We still weren't holding hands and if we did, they'd call us gay. But for a man who had spent 2 years locked up for exercising his 5th Amendment Rights, the speech had a special meaning. You had a right to remain silent, but if you exercised your right, they locked you up and threw away the key.

All because he had an AR-15 and several 30 round magazines locked away in a storage locker in San Fernando, CA. He'd prepaid the rent on the locker because when he'd rented it he was flush. That hadn't lasted and now he was ecstatic he'd prepaid the rent. The lawyer from the ACLU had told him that an employee at the firm where he was working had made the allegation that he had ties to a Muslim fund raising organization. The section on the ACLU was extremely accurate, their charter specifically requires that they support and defend the Bill of Rights.

The problem was that that included supporting most unpopular causes. When the Nazi's wanted to march in Skokie, IL, the Jewish lawyers of the ACLU had supported their right to do so. That also meant that they supported gay rights, and that made them unpopular. They supported so many unpopular causes that many narrow-minded people with an agenda detested and despised them. Our John Doe was no longer one of them. He no longer had a job and his accuser hadn't been identified, at least not by name. He ended up being labeled a traitor even though he had done nothing wrong.

Steve Henry was 33 when the feds tossed him in the slam and he was 35 when he was finally released. His name had been in every paper in the country and it didn't matter to many people that he hadn't done anything wrong. Once labeled, he was now forever a traitor. His hands weren't totally clean, he did bring an AR-15 and high capacity magazines into California but the moment he returned to the state where he'd bought them he was no longer in violation of any laws. No one would hire him either and what little bit of money he had began to disappear.

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Salvation came from a used paperback novel he'd picked in a mission where he'd gone to get something to eat. In the novel, the author described how his main character had changed his identity by starting with someone else's birth certificate and so on. Steve Henry became Matthew Helm. They had the same date and state of birth but his alter ego had died during his first year of life. Changing his appearance hadn't been hard because he'd grown his hair while locked up, almost to his shoulders. Now he began to grow his beard to further alter that appearance.

During the period he was setting his plan in motion, he lived off handouts from several missions and took on the appearance of just another of the millions of street bums that can be found in every major city. Armed with the single bit of information from the ACLU lawyer he rethought who might have ruined his life. His inescapable conclusion was that it must have been the guy he'd edged out for the promotion to foreman. When Matt was ready, he pawned the rifle and implemented his plan. The money got him clean clothes and his hair and beard trimmed. Now Matt was just another Joe Average with a mission. Payback can be a bitch and revenge is a dish best served cold.

Matt's first step was getting back on his feet so he got a union card and applied for a construction job as a carpenter, his regular occupation. He didn't have a single obligation in the world except to himself. Matt began to save his money and when he had enough, he moved out of the rooming house and into an efficiency apartment. Even before he made that move he had redeemed his AR-15 from the pawnshop. Although Steve had been a journeyman carpenter, Matt had to start as an apprentice. It was evident to everyone that Matt knew his way around a hammer and Skil saw and the owner of the small construction company took a liking to him.

"If you're an apprentice carpenter, I'll eat my hat," his boss, Ray Murray had said.

"Salt or pepper, Ray?" Matt laughed. "I changed my name and had to start over. I had a brush with the law and while I hadn't done anything wrong, I picked up a label and had to live with it."

"I can't think of many things that would stick to a fella like that," Ray said. "Say you aren't some sort of child molester are you?"

"Nothing like that Ray, but by the time the local newspaper tries you and convicts you, you're guilty regardless," Matt observed.

"You look vaguely familiar, but I can't say I really recognize you," Ray responded.

"Could we just leave it at that, Ray?" Matt asked.

"Sure Matt, I wasn't prying," Ray said. "Get back to work and just forget I said anything."

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A year later, Matt was reasonably well established and he had vacation coming. He took the opportunity to go back to California and look up the ACLU lawyer. He confronted the ACLU lawyer with a single name and the lawyer said he didn't recognize it but his eyes said something different. Now he was sure who had gotten him locked up in jail for 2 years on a false charge but he still wasn't in any position to do anything about it.

After that first year on the job Ray had come to him and asked him to be a foreman. Matt didn't know that Ray had eventually seen through his disguise and knew exactly

who he was. Ray was about 5 years older than Matt and he had spent 8 years in the Marine Corps. He'd followed Steve's story in the papers and had always thought Steve had gotten a raw deal. He also understood why Steve had found it necessary to change his identity. Convicted in the media, Steve obviously hadn't had any choice. This was the aftermath of 9/11 and the US was fighting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Matt began his second year on the job as a member of lower management. His wages were better and Ray had good insurance for his employees. Matt just continued to save his money and to think about getting even with that asshole in California. He didn't dwell on it, that would have been unhealthy, but someday he was going to even the score.

"Do you shoot?" Ray had asked on day.

"I have an AR-15, but I haven't shot it in a while," Matt replied.

"I never cared for that gun by Mattel, myself, even though I have one," Ray laughed. "I've always been partial to something with a little more kick like a 7.62. If you would like to go shooting someday, we can take out your AR and one of my FAL's."

"Any time, Ray, just say the word," Matt replied.

"Ok, you're on, how about Saturday?" Ray suggested.

"Why not, I'm not doing anything," Matt replied.

"All right!" Ray said. "I'll pick you up at your place around 8:30 on Saturday morning."

Matt cashed his paycheck Friday night and picked up a battle pack of .223 surplus. The following morning Ray picked him up and took him to a private, member's only rifle range. They took turns with the rifles and Matt began to become fond of the FAL. When they finished, Ray suggested that they go back to his apartment and clean the rifles and then go get a beer and pizza.

Matt's AR-15 was used, something he'd picked up at a gun show. It had obviously been a military M-16 at one time because the selector switch had 3 positions, safe, semi and auto. He had the rifle apart on the table when Ray asked if he could see it. Matt told him to help himself and went to get them 2 beers from Ray's refrigerator.

"This is a military conversion," Ray said. "But whoever did the demil, didn't do it right. They should have ground out some metal, not just swapped out the sear. It would be easy to switch this rifle back to full auto. Let me know if you ever want to switch it back."

"I wouldn't know where to get the parts," Matt protested.

"Hell, Matt, I wouldn't have made the offer if the parts were a problem," Ray laughed. "I was an armorer in the Corps for about 4 of my 8 years. I have all the parts a dozen

times over. Say the word and I can restore it in about 2 minutes flat, maybe less. Usually having the parts isn't the problem. The problem is finding a lower receiver that hasn't been demiled."

"Well..." Matt said.

"I have one myself that I found at a gun show and I didn't have a bit of trouble restoring it," Ray explained. "I just added a new heavy barrel and dropped in the parts."

"Maybe I'd better get it rebarreled first," Matt suggested.

"Fine, bring it back when you get it back from the shop and I'll make the conversion," Ray replied.

"What else did you bring with you when you got out of the Corps?" Matt asked.

"Nothing much just some KaBar's and some old magazines that I rebuilt." Ray replied. "You did pretty good with that FAL, did you ever think about buying one?"

"Not really," Matt replied.

"There's a company called DSA that puts out a fine rifle," Ray explained. "The nice thing about it is that you can pick up the magazines at gun shows for about \$5 apiece. They have some Austrian FAL's for under \$1,000. Let me know if you want one, I have my Federal Firearms License."

"I thought you had to have a store to have a FFL," Matt seemed surprised.

"I run the business out of the shop and I have an ad in the Yellow Pages that says, by appointment only," Ray explained. "There's an awful markup of firearms and you'd be surprised how cheaply I can get you the Austrian FAL. For a nominal fee, I can get one that's hand-picked."

"What was I shooting today?" Matt asked.

"The rifle I'm telling you about."

"You don't carry inventory?" Matt asked.

"Only for demo purposes," Ray replied. "They are all my personal arms. What do you know about the survivalist movement?"

"Not much, only that the media gives them a bad rap and that some of them seem to be a little extreme in their views," Matt replied.

“Matt, there’s good and bad in everything,” Ray replied. “Every day you read in the paper how some terrorist organization is going to do something else to the US. One of these days that could easily happen. It never hurts to be a little prepared. Even the government is suggesting that you keep a 72-hour supply of emergency food and water. One of those Russian satellites could be a nuclear weapon that they could generate an EMP and wipe out the electronics in the whole US.”

“I have a case of Aqua Fina and a half dozen MRE’s,” Matt replied.

“Do you have a Bug Out Bag?” Ray asked.

“No.”

“How about extra ammo for your rifle?”

“Not that either.”

“Well that old pickup of yours doesn’t have an electronic ignition so it would be ok if you had some extra ignition parts put aside,” Ray pointed out.

“Like what?” Matt asked.

“Points, condenser and coil,” Ray replied. “Store them wrapped up in several layers of foil inside of a metal box.”

“Your pickup isn’t as old as mine,” Matt pointed out.

“It has a diesel engine,” Ray commented. “I have both diesel fuel and gasoline at the shop. It’s a way of being prepared and lowering my overall business costs by buying fuel closer to wholesale prices.”

“How about we go get that pizza,” Matt suggested.

“Sure and we can talk about what you should put in your BOB,” Ray said.

“My what?”

“Your bug out bag, BOB for short,” Ray laughed. “I’ll describe mine to you and it will give you some idea of what I mean. First of all, I started out with a set of web gear and an ALICE Pack. I divided my needs into categories and here’s what I ended up with:”

“Shelter: Poncho, Space Blanket, plastic tube tent and several heavy duty leaf bags.”

“Clothing: 4 pairs of socks, leather gloves, watch cap, wool sweater, windbreaker, 2 large bandanas, hand towel, 2 sets of underwear, one set of long johns, and spare boot-laces.”

“Utility: Binoculars, hunting knife, Swiss Army knife, Gerber Multitool, a knife sharpener, paracord, a roll of duct tape, folding shovel, small folding bucket, sewing kit (needles, thread, buttons, rip stop tape, folding scissors and a sewing awl) and a small fishing kit (Hooks, line, split shot).”

“Directions: Local maps, compass, GPS wrapped in foil and stored with the ignition parts, and reference books on medicine and survival skills.”

“Ditty Bag: Toothbrush and paste, floss, razor and blades, hydrogen peroxide, liquid Dial soap, washcloth and hand towel, extra bandanas and extra toilet paper.”

“Water: Katadyn filter, purification tablets, and 2 GI surplus canteens with a canteen cup and a canteen stove.”

“Heat/Light: Waterproof matches, butane lighter, 100-hour candle, and fuel bars.”

“Communications: AM/FM transistor radio wrapped in several layers of foil and stored with the ignition parts, flashlight, spare batteries for everything, spare bulbs, notebook and pens, light sticks, signaling mirror, whistle, and one roll each of pre-65 dimes quarters and halves.”

“First Aid: Triangular bandage, band aids, moleskin, antiseptic towelettes, gauze pads, tape, tweezers, magnifying glass, Imodium AD, insect repellent, potassium iodide, Aspirin/Tylenol, Vicodin, thermometer, vitamins, ace bandages, hot and cold packs, scalpel, blades and suture kit.”

“Food: Drink and soup mixes, instant coffee, 6 MRE’s and snacks.”

“Since I carry a FAL rifle, I have magazine pouches and magazines on the web belt and 2 battle packs of 7.62 ammo on stripper clips with the charging adapter. I also carry a M1911 in a leather flap holster with 4 extra magazines in pouches and a 50-round box of cartridges,” Ray summed up. “I keep my BOB locked in the toolbox on my truck along with the ignition parts box, jumper cables, a small toolbox, 10-gallons of fuel in 5-gallon cans plus my bugout weapons. I did a couple of extra things like get the full set of road and topo maps for the GPS.”

“Pretty impressive bug out bag,” Matt acknowledged, “What else have you done?”

“Matt, I have a lot of extra ammo, 2 1-year deluxe supplies of food from a place in Idaho called Walton Feed, heirloom seeds and the fuel down at the shop,” Ray replied. “I usually give myself and my employees their Christmas bonus either in cash or in Canadian Maple Leafs. I take mine in the Maple Leafs. But it is a good idea to keep some cash on hand for before we get down to trading in gold and silver.”

“Anything else?” Matt asked.

“Coleman camping stove with spare generator, Coleman double mantle lantern and spare mantles in a case, both of which run on unleaded fuel, plus a cooking kit, a sleeping bag and insulite pad, a camp potty with extra bags and a saw and axe and a stored Kenwood HF/VHF/UHF TS-2000 radio mobile radio with 2 multiband mobile antennas on my pickup. All you need is a technician’s license.”

“That’s all you have for firearms, FAL rifles and a M1911?” Matt asked.

“No, I have a Ruger 10/22 with several bricks of assorted 22LR ammo and a Remington combo 12-gauge shotgun with a magazine extension and 20” improved cylinder bore barrel with rifle sights. I have a case each of Federal 9-pellet tactical buck and tactical slugs plus an assortment of hunting shells. If I had to bug out and had half an hour, I could get everything in the back of my pickup and be long gone. Later, I could rearrange everything in the back of my pickup and sleep under the topper. So I didn’t need to bother with a tent, but I have a small tarp that could double as a rain cover or tent.”

“I’ve been saving most of my money for a little project I have in mind,” Mike said.

“The only person revenge hurts is the person taking revenge, Mr. Steve Henry,” Ray replied “I told you that I thought you looked familiar. That was a raw deal you got. That’s what happens when the government starts to mess with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Don’t worry, I’ll never tell anyone who you are.”

“I guess I could shave off this beard,” Matt said.

“Leave it, Matt, that way no one else will recognize you.”

“So do you belong to any kind of organization, Ray” Matt asked.

“No. Once you do that, you begin to really attract the attention of the government,” Ray replied.

“Are you a class III dealer?” Matt asked.

“It wasn’t worth the trouble and they really check you over once you go to class III. Nope just a regular retailer, but I can get anything in the world you’d want, class III or otherwise. Technically that AR-15/M16 of yours is a class III weapon because it wasn’t properly demiled anyway.”

“That’s why I sat in jail for 2 years,” Matt explained. “I was in California and I had the rifle and high capacity magazines in a storage locker. I didn’t want to run afoul of California law so when they told me I had a right to remain silent, I did. I always thought the ACLU was a bunch of jerks, but they got me out and I never did have to give more than name, rank, serial number, date of birth and my legal address.”

“How did you come up with the new name?” Ray asked.

“The usual, found a kid with the same DOB that had died as a baby and got a copy of his birth certificate,” Matt explained. “That’s getting pretty hard to do anymore.”

“If you still have your legitimate ID, you can use it as a backup and get a Passport under your real name,” Ray suggested. “Once you do that, we can get you a phony under your assumed name. It will be guaranteed to work too, that’s why they cost as much as they do. I have 4 sets of papers and credit cards to go with each one. They’re genuine Passports that are hot around the edges and they have to hack the system and upload the data. It’s purely optional as far as I’m concerned, but it is available.”

“A little at a time, Ray, let me get a Passport application and start putting together a BOB,” Matt responded.

Matt slowly assembled his BOB and got the extra ignition parts. Ray hadn’t talked him out of wanting revenge, but there most certainly wasn’t any rush. He got the Austrian FAL through Ray and bought ammo every payday. The first 10% of every paycheck went into savings. Then he paid his bills and spent any leftover money on preparations. Ray and he went shooting once a month and he was better with both rifles than he’d ever been in the Army.

Matt checked out the Walton Feed Company using a computer at the library and he found it would take \$1,000 to put up a one-year deluxe supply of food. It wasn’t that far from Idaho to Nevada and the freight wasn’t as bad as he thought it would be. They hit the guns shows and loaded up on magazines for the FAL and AR-15 rifles. He acquired the ammo a battle pack at a time until he thought he had enough for World War III. He never converted the AR back to a M16, either. Nor did he have any phony ID other than the Matt Helm identity he used to get the job from Ray.

It slowly came together, a piece at a time. Matt was getting prepared but for what he had no idea. A bachelor living in a one-room efficiency apartment doesn’t have a lot of expenses. Into the second year on the job, his apartment began looking like a storage room so he rented a storage locker and moved the stuff out of his apartment.

“Matt, let’s go shooting tomorrow and do pizza and beer,” Ray suggested. “I want to be brought up to date on your preparations.”

“I have so much stuff I had to get a storage locker,” Matt explained.

“Does it have 24-hour access?” Ray asked.

“Yes and it uses keys, not some sort of electronic lock,” Matt replied.

“Great, 8:30 ok?” Ray asked.

"I'll be ready," Matt agreed.

After they finished at the range the following day they went back to Ray's to clean their rifles.

"You ready to have me install the parts and get the rifle back to full auto?" Ray asked.

"Oh what the hell, I'm used to sitting in a cell, go ahead," Matt answered.

"How are the preps going?" Ray asked.

"I got the BOB finished and put a toolbox in the back of my pickup. I put everything you suggested in the toolbox. Instead of a camping stove, I bought a Dutch oven and cast iron skillet. I bought kerosene lanterns instead of a Coleman lantern because those globes are too fragile. They had a buy two get one free sale and they burn for 35 hours on a single filling. I bought a tent instead of a topper for the pickup. I also bought an old enclosed 5'x8' trailer to haul my food and supplies," Matt replied.

"Where's the trailer?" Ray asked.

"In the storage shed all loaded up and ready to go," Matt replied. "That food was sure expensive; it's just a good thing I didn't need to ship it halfway across the country."

"How are you on ammo, Matt?" Ray asked.

"I've bought a battle pack of .223 or 7.62 or something else every single payday since I started. I could fight World War III," Matt laughed.

"What haven't you got?" Ray asked.

"I still need a pistol, a shotgun and .22 rifle, Ray," Matt explained. "Other than that, I'd say I'm ready."

"Here's your M16, back to original condition," Ray handed Matt the rifle. "Maybe I ought to look into buying an enclosed trailer. That would free up the space in the back of my pickup. When do you plan to pick up the other weapons?"

"I bought the .45 and I can pick it up on Friday," Matt explained. "I thought I would look for a used combo shotgun and a .22 rifle then."

"What about the ammo?" Ray asked.

"I have the ammo, I told you I was buying a battle pack or something else every payday," Matt explained. "All I need is the guns."

“How does it feel to know that you are prepared for anything that might happen?” Ray asked.

“It doesn’t really feel any different and I’d have had one hell of a lot more money in savings if I hadn’t been buying all of this stuff,” Matt replied.

“But with your setup, all you have to do is to hook on to that trailer and bug out,” Ray explained. “I’m definitely going to look into that trailer. It would save me the trouble of trying to load my things when we’re in the middle of a disaster.”

“Well if those terrorists set off a stolen Russian nuke in the heart of Vegas, it won’t make any difference how well we’re prepared, will it?” Matt laughed.

“I guess not, no,” Ray admitted. “Say I have to hire some people for a new job on Monday. I put all of the applications on your desk for you to sort through. There’s one there that I think you might find very interesting.”

“Oh?” Matt asked, raise his brows.

“It’s a guy who just moved here from California, Matt,” Ray explained. “He used to be a foreman for a construction company, but they let him go, he claims, in an economy move.”

“Anyone I know?” Matt asked.

“Possibly.”

“Any guidelines for me to consider?” Matt asked.

“You might want to consider hiring him, I don’t think he’d recognize you,” Ray said. “This could be more fun than a trip to Disneyland.”

Title 18 – Chapter 3 – Swarm

“This is Jeff up at Long Valley Observatory, are you picking up this latest swarm?” Jeff Hershey asked Menlo Park on the phone.

“We have it Jeff, what’s happening with the resurgent dome?” Menlo Park asked.

“It’s growing at a foot a day, maybe more,” Jeff replied. “I recommending that we move from green to yellow. Can you coordinate sending the Watch message to California OES?”

“We’ll handle it Jeff.”

No Immediate Risk:

Typical Behavior: Since 1980, typical background geologic activity in the Long Valley area has included as many as 20 earthquakes of magnitude 2 or smaller a day, occasional swarms of magnitude 3 and larger earthquakes (felt locally), and uplift of the center of Long Valley Caldera at a rate of about 1 inch per year. Swarms including magnitude 4 earthquakes may occur about once a year.

Routine Monitoring: When appropriate, information calls placed to USGS personnel, Town, County, and State (OES, California Division of Mines and Geology) authorities, and locally operating Federal agencies (U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management) regarding felt earthquakes and notable changes in other types of geologic activity, such as ground deformation, volcanic gas emissions, and fumarolic activity.

Watch:

Intense Unrest (may occur about once a decade): For example, a quake swarm with at least one magnitude 5 earthquake and (or) evidence of increased magma movement or pressure at depth, as indicated by a pronounced increase in the rate of ground deformation.

Intensified Monitoring. Set up emergency field headquarters in the Long Valley area. WATCH message sent by USGS to California OES, which promptly notifies local authorities.

Warning:

Eruption Likely within hours or days (may occur every few hundred years): Strong evidence of magma movement at shallow depth.

Geologic Hazard Warning issued by USGS to Governors of California and Nevada and others, who inform the public. Continue intensive on-site monitoring.

Alert:

Eruption Underway (may occur every few hundred years).

Sustained Monitoring and Communication. Maintain intensive monitoring and continuously keep civil authorities informed on progress of eruption and likely future developments.

The US Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) and local authorities, has established these procedures to respond to different levels of geologic unrest in the Long Valley area of eastern California.

In May of 1980, a strong earthquake swarm that included four Richter magnitude 6 earthquakes struck the southern margin of Long Valley Caldera associated with a 25-cm, dome-shaped uplift of the Caldera floor. These events marked the onset of the latest period of Caldera unrest that continues to this day. This ongoing unrest includes recurring earthquake swarms and continued dome-shaped uplift of the central section of the Caldera (the resurgent dome) accompanied by changes in thermal springs and gas emissions. After the quake another road was created as an escape route. Its name at first was proposed as the "Mammoth Escape Route" but was changed to the Mammoth Scenic Route after Mammoth area businesses and landowners complained.

Where is the Long Valley Caldera in relation to Las Vegas, Nevada?

230 miles (371 km) (200 nautical miles)

Initial heading from Mammoth Lakes to Las Vegas:
East-southeast (114.0 degrees)

Initial heading from Las Vegas to Mammoth Lakes:
West-northwest (246.0 degrees)

The last really major eruption that formed the Caldera was a very long time ago, something on the order of 760,000 years. The ash beds that it produced are called the Bishop Tuff and they can be found in California, Arizona, New Mexico, the Texas panhandle, the Oklahoma panhandle, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, Utah and Colorado. There are good points and bad points in moving to Utah. You'll be ok unless Long Valley does a super volcano bit. If that happens, head to Montana. All of Utah, Colorado and Arizona were covered in ash. Except for Texas, Oklahoma and southwestern South Dakota, most of the other states were at least half covered in ash. All of that seismic activity was the magma slowly pooling under the resurgent dome, which covers about one-half to two-thirds of the Caldera.

Nice place, Las Vegas, right in the path of the heaviest ashfall. The city is bisected by I-15 that comes from California and goes to Utah. That won't do you any good, now will it? You most certainly don't want to go northwest on 93 or north on 95, do you? You

could go southeast on 93 or south on 95, and if you could make it to México, you might be safe. Assuming the Méxicans would let you in, that is. México is in the people exporting business, not the people importing business. Maybe if you could get to the mountains in northwestern Nevada, you'd be safe. You could winter in Donner Pass. Take lots of food! And remember, the snow gets pretty deep in Donner Pass during the winter. And, how do you get to Donner Pass from Las Vegas? Why highway 95, of course. Or, you take 93 to 50 and turn west. You'd better not take 95, or you might get into the pyroclastic flow when you're going west on highway 6.

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"And why did you leave your last job?" Matt asked.

"We finished the job and they didn't have any more scheduled," George replied.

"I see, George," Matt said. "Ray said that we wanted to hire you. I'm going to assign you to work with a fella named John. You'll like John; he has quite a sense of humor."

John was the biggest goldbrick that Ray had and he was a past master at getting his partner do all of the heavy and dirty work. But he did have a sense of humor, as in practical joker. John wasn't on Matt's crew and George wouldn't be either.

"Are you sure I don't know you, Matt?" George asked. "You seem so familiar. Have you ever been to California?"

"Do you know anyone in Nevada who hasn't been to California?" Matt asked. "I put in some time down there at Terminal Island." (Rule one)

Terminal Island is an artificial island located in Los Angeles County, California between Los Angeles Harbor and Long Beach Harbor. It hosts canneries, shipyards, a US Navy base and a federal prison.

Ray made certain that George didn't get anywhere near Matt because Matt was a valuable employee and George was proving to be less than average. Worse, George didn't seem to have much of a sense of humor and the more he fussed the worse John laid into him. Ray finally had to tell John to back off, but only a little. John did too for maybe a week and then he was right back at it. Practice makes perfect, apparently and John knew just how far he could push good old George.

"I wish you could have seen it, Matt, John almost had him tears," Ray laughed.

"It doesn't make up for the 2 years I spent at Terminal Island," Matt frowned.

"You'll have your chance one of these days, Matt," Ray replied. "I'm going to bid on a contract over in Lone Pine. If we get the deal, I'll send John and George over there."

"It may have been a mistake hiring him," Matt suggested. "He isn't that good of an employee and if he figures out who I am it could ruin everything."

"He hasn't done anything I can fire him for," Ray pointed out. "But if we don't get the job in Lone Pine, I'll have to cut several people. He's one of the newest so he'll be one of the first to go."

"I wanted to hurt him so bad I could taste it, if you know what I mean, Ray," Matt said. "Now seeing how far down he's come, I don't care one way or the other."

"I'm happy to hear you say that, the only person we end up getting even with is ourselves, 9 times out of 10," Ray grinned. "Do you want the pleasure of letting him go if we don't get that job in Lone Pine?"

"Nope. As far as I'm concern, that's a closed chapter."

"Did you get the rifle and the shotgun when you picked up the M1911?" Ray asked.

"I have everything ready. Boss," Matt laughed. "Hell, I even went out and added an auxiliary gas tank to my pickup."

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Getting prepared is only part of the battle. Staying prepared is a second part and planning where you're going to bug out to is in the top three. It sort of depended on what happened. If Yellowstone blew the two of them would probably head southwest down I-15. If one of California's nuclear reactors went they'd be better off heading the other way. Sometimes the best plans in the world can't allow for every contingency.

"This is Long Valley Observatory, are you picking up this latest swarm?" Jeff Hershey asked Menlo Park on the phone.

"It's starting to get ugly isn't it?" Menlo Park responded. "What's the rate of growth on that uplift?"

"Six feet in the last day," Jeff replied. "I think we're getting close to a small eruption."

"Evacuate and I'll issue the warning," Menlo Park instructed.

The USGS issued a Geologic Hazard Warning to the Governors of California and Nevada. A warning was also issued to the Department of Homeland Security because FEMA is part of DHS. Arnold ordered the immediate evacuation of an area roughly 100 miles around the Californian Caldera. Nevada's Governor Kenny Guinn extended the evacuation to the citizens of Nevada by extending Arnold's circle into Nevada. The area of evacuation didn't extend to Las Vegas or 140 miles to Reno. Ray got the contract in Lone Pine but because of the volcano warning wasn't able to send any of his workers.

There must be 6 kinds of luck but dumb luck is just as good as any of the other five kinds.

A Geologic Hazard Warning indicates that an eruption is likely within hours or days. On Thursday, March 27, 1980, USGS officials issued a Hazards Watch to public officials. At 11:20AM an observer in an Army National Guard reconnaissance plane reported seeing a hole in the icecap near the summit and a gray streak extending southeast from the hole. At approximately 12:30 people near the volcano reported hearing a loud “boom,” which probably marked the first sighted explosion. Mike Beard, a Portland radio reporter, was flying over the cloud-shrouded mountain and reported seeing “ash and smoke spewing out, a little like smoke out of a chimney.” At 2:00PM UW seismologists recorded the second strongest earthquake to date (a magnitude 4.7). Following the earthquake a black plume was observed to rise about 7,000 feet above the volcano.

On April 3, 1980, Governor Dixie Lee Ray declared a State of Emergency and set up a “Mount St. Helens Watch Group.” Local officials in Oregon and Washington issued pamphlets prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency on “What to do during a volcano ashfall.” On April 9, 1980, The USFS officially designated Mount St. Helens a “geologic area,” which protected the forest around the mountain from future land use changes.

On April 30, 1980, Concerned with the increasing instability of the bulge, USGS scientists issued an updated Hazards Warning. Governor Ray and Forest Supervisor Robert Tokarczyk closed additional areas near the volcano based on this information. A Red Zone was established whose boundary ranged from 3 to 7 miles out from the peak. Access in this zone was restricted to scientists, law enforcement, and other officials. A Blue Zone was established. Access into this area was restricted during daylight hours to loggers and property owners with special permits.

On May 17, 1980, Mt. St. Helens remained quiet. Seismic activity reached the lowest level for May, with only 18 earthquakes larger than 3.0 recorded (including 6 larger than magnitude 4.0). In response to pressure from property owners and with the Governor’s consent, law enforcement officials escorted about 50 carloads of property owners into the Red Zone to retrieve possessions. Those who entered were required to sign liability waivers at the roadblocks and to leave by nightfall. Authorities agreed to allow another caravan of property owners in at 10:00 am the following morning.

At 0832 on May 18, 1980, a complex earthquake ($M=5.1$) shook the volcano, probably causing (but possibly caused by) a huge, 2.7-cubic-kilometer-landslide that in three different blocks successively removed the bulge and upper 400 meters of the volcano (Voight, et. al., 1981, 1983), leaving a 600-meter-deep crater 2 kilometers wide rim-to-rim. The landslide quickly developed into a debris avalanche that sped at 110-240 kilometers/hour for 24 kilometers down the North Fork Toutle River; arms of the avalanche entered Spirit Lake, 8 kilometers from the summit, and overtopped 300-380-meter high Johnston Ridge north of the Toutle. The avalanche buried the Toutle Valley to a depth

of nearly 50 meters. Its hummocky deposit is distinctive; similar morphology at other volcanoes has been reinterpreted in light of its observed origin (Siebert, et. al., 1987).

The USGS was taken completely by surprise when Mt. St. Helens erupted. They knew that it was going to happen sooner or later, but had no idea when. A replacement geologist had been sent to the observation post 5 miles north of the volcano on the afternoon of May 17th. He and 56 others died in the eruption at 8:32 am the following day. Those if, not when, things always seem to get us. The day before the eruption, people had forced the authorities to allow them into the Red Zone. There must be 6 kinds of luck but dumb luck is just as good as any of the other five kinds.

“No, lady, you can’t go in there. As near as we can tell the road is 25,000’ above Spokane about now.”

We missed a chance at some wonderful photos at Mt. St. Helens. The biggest problem the FAA had before the eruption was keeping the news helicopters out of the area. They shouldn’t have done that because it violated the freedom of the press to die in the pursuit of a news story. Man, can you imagine the close-ups? Well, provided they could find the camera in the wreckage.

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Just to be safe, Ray gave his employees the rest of the day off, with pay, when Governor Guinn issued the warning. He needed the time to load all of his things into the used trailer he’d purchased only the day before. Matt helped and by evening both trailers were fully loaded and ready to go, if necessary. They also filled their tanks and loaded 10 jerry cans of fuel aboard each of their pickups, just in case. It was a long time from March 27, 1980 to May 18, 1980, 53 days, inclusive. The next day Ray felt foolish that he’d given the time off and put them back to work.

“All right, we know what the hazard is, what are we going to do about it?” Matt asked Ray.

“I went out on the Internet last night and according to a map that I found on Wikipedia, the Bishop ash flow excluded northwestern Nevada,” Ray replied.

“But to get to Reno, we’d have to take 95 north and turn west on US 6 at Tonopah,” Matt pointed out.

“We could also take I-15 to 93 north and take that to Ely. We could pick up US 50 in Ely and take it to Reno or continue north to I-80 and take it to Reno,” Ray suggested. “We could either go to Lake Tahoe or Washoe Lake. US 50 would take us right into Tahoe.”

“If their estimates are right about how big the eruption will be, I don’t think it will matter,” Matt shrugged his shoulders. “They only cleared out a 100-mile circle around the Caldera. We have to be over 200 miles from Long Valley.”

“230 miles, I looked it up,” Ray replied. “The USGS has their moments and sometimes they blow it. They put a guy named Dave Johnston 5 miles north of Mt. St. Helens the day before it erupted.”

The USGS had learned its lesson and in the years since 1982, the Caldera was heavily instrumented. They had tilt meters and everything they needed to follow the growth of the resurgent dome. It was a very large area and it was growing faster than the bulge had grown on Mt. St. Helens. Unlike the mountain, the growth was visually less obvious because of the size of the area. Both the Menlo Park, CA and Denver, CO Volcano Hazards Program offices were monitoring the situation. The program had observatories in Alaska, the Cascades, Hawaii, Long Valley and at Yellowstone.

It was easy for the USGS to go to stage 4 and issue an alert in Hawaii. Those volcanoes weren't terribly explosive. When it got to the point that the dome was visibly growing, USGS reissued the warning with the addition that the eruption was expected to be explosive and was imminent. The 2007 eruption of the Long Valley Caldera turned into a super volcano and the ash field would end up being about the size of the Bishop ash field. They even heard it in Las Vegas on June 3, 2007 when it blew.

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“Oh, oh, what the hell was that?” Matt asked.

“It could have been a sonic boom,” Ray suggested.

“I'll turn on a radio and make sure it wasn't Long Valley,” said Matt, reaching for a portable radio.

...Alert. To repeat, approximately 5 minutes ago, the Long Valley Caldera exploded and the USGS has issued an alert. At this time the only additional information we have is an aside comment that the explosion was very, very big...

“Guess it wasn't a sonic boom,” Ray acknowledged.

“Do we sit it out or head for Tahoe?” Matt asked.

“I read that article on Wiki and if this eruption is as big as the one that happened 600,000 years ago, I'd say that Vegas is in trouble,” Ray suggested. “If we were to leave now, we might get past a lot of the ash before it arrived.”

“Are you talking about just picking up and leaving?” Matt asked.

“That's always been the plan if Las Vegas became uninhabitable,” Ray reminded Matt. “The only choice we have to make is whether to leave now and try to beat the ash fall or wait until it's over.”

"I'll go to the bank, clean out my account and hook onto my trailer and come back," Matt announced.

"Fine. I'll clean out the account and pay off the employees while you're doing that," Ray agreed.

"Ok folks, here's the story," Ray announced. "Matt and I are leaving. I'm going to pay off your wages and leave the building open for those of you who want access. There's diesel and gasoline in the tanks and you're free to help yourselves. George, you used to be a foreman so I'll give you the keys and leave you in charge. If it gets very bad, I'd advise all of you to bug out and head for Lake Tahoe. The last time Long Valley had a major eruption Tahoe was spared most of the ash fall. Are there any questions?"

There was a lot of complaining, but very few questions. The people just wanted to get their money and get home to their families. The pyroclastic flow at Mt. St. Helens had only advanced at the rate of 150mph. This one wasn't moving any faster and Ray and Matt were on I-15 and headed north long before the ash cloud hit Las Vegas. They made it to just south of Ely before they ran into trouble. Day turned into night as the ash cloud arrived. They got through Ely and began to follow the torturous route over to Lake Tahoe. They finally had to stop west of Ely and shut down their engines.

"What's wrong?" Matt asked.

"I think my air filter is clogged," Ray replied. "I have a spare so I'll put in a new one."

"I don't so I'll have to knock as much of the dust out as I can," Matt responded. "How much farther is Lake Tahoe?"

"Maybe 300 miles," Ray answered.

"300 miles? I don't know whether we can make it," Matt suggested.

"This is a desolate stretch of road, Matt," Ray pointed out. "Especially in these conditions. We can stop at the next town, top off our tanks and see about more air filters for the pickups."

Have you ever been on US 50 as it crosses Nevada? I haven't but it looks like it's mountainous and there are very few towns between Ely and Lake Tahoe. 12 hours later they finally drove out of the ash fall west of Fallon, NV. It was later in the evening when they pulled into a truck stop near Carson City. Ray and Matt arranged to have their vehicles serviced and got new filters for everything and an oil change. They also bought spares of the filters, just in case.

Carson City, NV is only 135 miles from Mammoth Lakes, CA and only a little short of radius of the pyroclastic flow. However, geological features kept the pyroclastic flow far

south of Carson City and prevailing winds were carrying the ash fall in other directions, mostly to the east.

Some have described Lake Tahoe as America's Alps. It straddles the California-Nevada state line. Matt and Ray followed US 50 around the lake into California and headed for an area southwest of Emerald Bay. You can see it on the map of Lake Tahoe, where the South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce designated it as a Desolation Wilderness. Actually they were camping at Fallen Leaf Lake.

◦

The Fallen Leaf Lake Campground is approximately ¼ mile north of Fallen Leaf Lake. Nestled among towering native pine trees, this campground offers a variety of recreational activities and is very close to the Taylor Creek Visitor Center which offers many interpretive programs and easy access to Lake Tahoe. It is a National Forest campground operated by a private concessionaire, California Land Management. Fallen Leaf is located on the south side of Lake Tahoe, 3 miles north of the "Y" (the intersection of Hwy 50 and Hwy 89) in South Lake Tahoe. The campground entrance can be accessed by turning off Hwy 89 onto Fallen Leaf Lake Road, \$20 a night plus \$5 for the second vehicle.

George was lucky only being stuck in Las Vegas. He could have been at Lone Pine or at what used to be Lone Pine. The immediate death toll from the eruption wasn't terribly bad. Thank God the Governors had evacuated a 100-mile radius from the Caldera. Well, mostly. People in Fresno couldn't see the need to move. They were lucky too because the pyroclastic flow didn't reach that far. Matt and Ray pitched Matt's tent and they turned in.

◦

In far off Washington, DC, FEMA was mobilizing. FEMA had never had to cope with a disaster of this scope and they immediately began to run short of resources. Entire states were being covered in ash. 659,000 years ago, Long Valley had erupted spewing forth 580km³ of ash. This time they weren't so lucky, the eruption had produced closer to 1,000km³ of ash. Ash clouds are filled with static electricity. People in the area of devastation were having problems getting radio broadcasts and TV was having trouble too because most cable providers relied on satellites to provide their network feeds.

"Good morning," Ray greeted Matt.

"It's closer to noon Ray," Matt pointed out. "It doesn't appear to me that the people managing this campground paid much attention to their 205 campsite limit."

"We were just lucky to even get a campsite," Ray pointed out.

"I made coffee, help yourself."

“Sure,” Ray replied. “Then we’d better unpack my trailer and get out the things that we’re going to need to make the campsite homey.”

“I wouldn’t get too comfortable just yet, Ray,” Matt suggested. “I tried the radio and I can’t get anything but static. I asked up at the office and they didn’t have any news about the scope of this disaster. They have a line of cars stretching as far as the eye can see.”

“Should we stay here or move on?” Ray asked.

“It doesn’t make any difference, the guy at the office said they would be strictly enforcing the 2-week stay limit,” Matt pointed out. “Let’s just stay here and let things sort themselves out. I don’t like being back in California, especially with all the things we have in the way of firearms. That’s what ended me up in jail the last time.”

“Those firearms could be the least of our worries,” Ray suggested. “It doesn’t look like most of these people have much in the way of food. We’d better get out the maps and look for someplace we can move to. We can’t really share our food and I don’t want to kill anyone over a can of beans. If anyone asks what’s in our trailers, just tell them that we were in the process of moving.”

“Well, that would explain our having camping equipment,” Matt agreed. “I wonder how my buddy George is making out.”

“I thought you’d like that touch,” Ray laughed. “That’s why I put him in charge. George is probably up to his butt in alligator’s right about now.”

“Hi, fellas.”

Matt looked up to see two women in their late 20’s. Way better than average, but a little young for his tastes.

“Hi girls,” Ray replied, “Anything we can do to help you?”

“Hi, my name is Bonnie and this is Sandra,” one of the girls replied. “We hitched a ride to the campgrounds and were looking around trying to find our friends. We can’t find them anywhere. We saw your coffee and were wondering if we might get a cup?”

“I have cups,” Matt offered. “Hang on a minute and let me get you a couple.”

“Where are you ladies from?” Ray asked.

“Reno,” Sandra replied.

“You might wish you were back in Reno before this is all over,” Ray suggested.

“The place is a zoo,” Bonnie replied. “People are flooding into Reno from everywhere.”

“What do you do in Reno?” Matt asked.

“We’re entertainers,” Sandra replied.

“Show girls at a casino?” Ray asked.

“Not exactly, but we work in and around the casinos,” Bonnie replied.

“I see,” Ray replied.

He really didn’t but that was beside the point. At the moment, he could think of a lot of things that would be worse than entertaining a couple of entertainers. Matt got out a box of Minute Rice and two large cans of chili. He fixed the chili and rice and they invited the girls to share their food. Bonnie and Sandra eagerly accepted. One of the girls was carrying a battered suitcase and the other had a backpack. However, it didn’t appear that they had anything to live on. The girls thanked them for the coffee, food and conversation and went to look for their friends. An hour later, they were back.

“Couldn’t find your friends?” Ray asked.

“No and we looked everywhere,” Bonnie replied.

“We don’t have much but you’re welcome to share what we have,” Matt offered.

Title 18 – Chapter 4 – The Entertainers

The girls claimed their names were Bonnie Bakley and Sandra Bullock. There was something familiar about the names but the guys were concentrating on their legs and not their names. When it began to get late, Matt got out 2 blankets for Bonnie and Sandra and Ray offered to share their tent. The girls were exceedingly grateful, but not that grateful, if you get my meaning. They were fishing and they had a nibble. It would be a while before Bonnie and Sandra set the hook.

Reno, Nevada claims it is the Biggest Little City in the World. Even though no one can explain Reno's convoluted slogan, Reno is an oasis and a fun place to stop. This is especially true for westbound travelers who have just crossed Nevada's beautiful yet imposing desert. For the travel weary, Reno is an oasis. Reno is Las Vegas in miniature. Like its big sister to the south, Reno is awash in neon, perhaps the largest concentration of building lighting on all of Route 40.

As is the case all over Nevada, you can't spit without hitting a slot machine or a video poker game. They are in just about every gas station in the Silver State as well as in fast food restaurants. In addition to gambling, Reno is also home to some of the finest in roadside attractions. A fine collection of diners reside here, as do many older hotels. The National Bowling Stadium also makes its home in Reno. And don't forget, The Ponderosa is nearby.

Another oddity you'll find in Nevada is legal prostitution. Yes, legal. And the Reno area is home to some of the most notorious of the brothels, including the now closed Mustang Ranch. If you spent a night at a major hotel chain in Reno, you were as likely as not to find fliers for the Mustang area brothels in your room as well as in the lobby tourist attraction rack ("We'll pay car fare for carloads with two or more customers...").

(I just thought I'd tell you a little bit about Reno, Nevada. Be careful what links you click on, you might start to receive a lot of emails, and how would you explain that to your wife? It's worth the look, but not the headache!)

The following day, the campground was overflowing. It appeared that Ray and Matt had better make an exit sooner than wait out the 14-day stay limit. They told the girls that they were leaving and the girls asked if they could come along because their friends still hadn't shown up. A smart man would have figured out that Bonnie Bakley was Robert Blake's dead wife and Sandra Bullock was an actress. Like, I said, nice legs. Two men, about 40 and 45 and two women in their late 20's who are entertainers...

"Ok ladies," Ray said, "Who is riding with whom?"

"I'll ride with you, Ray," Bonnie said. "Sandra can ride with Matt. We really do appreciate this. I don't know what we would have done."

The men and women ended up at Lake Van Norden, California, just a little west of Donner Pass. The area seemed to be reasonably uninhabited. Lake Van Norden was a small lake and it suited their purposes perfectly.

“Are you any relation to the actress by the same name?” Matt asked.

“No, afraid not,” Sandra replied. Sandra had taken the name when she’d seen Sandra Bullock in the sitcom *Working Girl* (1990). Sandra Bullock, 33B-24-34, didn’t have anywhere near the figure that Sandra had. “Are Ray and you from around here?”

“Las Vegas,” Matt answered. “What is your real name?”

“Susan McCormick,” Sandra answered truthfully.

“Well Susan what type of entertainer are you?” Matt asked.

“Shouldn’t that be obvious?” Susan asked.

“Yes, but I just wanted you to be honest with me,” Matt replied. “You’d better have a talk with Mrs. Robert Blake and tell her to get honest with Ray or she’ll find herself looking for someone else.”

“You mean I can stay?” Susan replied. “No strings?”

“No strings,” Matt answered.

“What’s your last name, Matt?”

“Does the name Steve Henry mean anything to you?” Matt asked.

“No, should it?” Susan asked.

“Matthew Helm is an alias, Susan,” Matt replied. “My real name is Steve Henry.”

“Why would you use an alias?” Susan asked.

“I was accused of something I didn’t do and sat in prison at Terminal Island for 2 years while the ACLU worked to secure my release,” Steve replied.

“What were you accused of?” Susan asked.

“Treason,” Steve replied. “Or, something related.”

“Bonnie and I have our share of arrests,” Susan admitted. “But we were guilty as charged.”

"I wasn't, Susan, but the Patriot Act neatly sidesteps the Constitution," Steve replied. "The bottom line was that I couldn't find work under my real name and I ended up adopting an alias. Being accused of Treason is like being accused of being a child molester. Once labeled, the label sticks with you."

"What's going to happen now, Steve?" Susan asked.

"I don't really know, Susan," Steve admitted. "Ray and I were prepared for a disaster and we have more than enough supplies to last for a while."

"And what was the real reason that Ray and you invited Bonnie and me along?" Susan asked. "Surely you didn't do it out of the goodness of your hearts."

"Not exactly, no," Steve replied.

"I didn't think so," Susan replied. "But you said there weren't any strings."

"I meant what I said; Susan, but surely you can see the reality of the situation, can't you?"

"Yes, I can, but I wanted to hear you admit it," she replied.

"We're here," Steve said.

"We're where?" Susan asked.

"It's called Lake Van Norden," Steve replied.

"So is this going to be a group sex thing or do you have another tent?" Susan asked.

"We only have one tent, but Ray has a topper on his truck," Steve replied.

"I'll explain everything to Bonnie," Susan suggested.

"That might be a very good idea," Steve agreed.

"Bonnie, can I have a word with you?" Susan asked.

"What's going on?" Ray asked

"You can call me Steve and you can call Sandra, Susan," Steve explained. "Bonnie will tell you her real name, presumably, and we can get started off on a new footing. Susan and I will take the tent and Bonnie and you can take the pickup."

"Oh?" Ray asked.

"It seems that the ladies are working girls," Steve replied and Sandra Bullock is really Susan McCormick."

"And?" Ray asked.

"Susan understands what our motive was and I told her that there were no strings," Steve replied.

"Ray, my real name is June Shelton," Bonnie announced later, "Is your real name Ray or is that an alias too?"

"June, my real name is Ray Murray and I don't give a flip what you used to do. There are no strings from me either," Ray replied.

"Let's get the tent set up and transfer those fuel cans from your pickup to my pickup," Steve suggested. "Susan would June and you gather all the leaves you can find to put under the floor of the tent before we set it up?"

o

Steve dug out his chain saw and they proceeded to drop trees so they could construct one or two log cabins. The ash cloud was finally settling and the static was dying down. Everything west of the Mississippi River was some sort of disaster zone and the government had started at the river and was working its way west, very, very slowly. In the major western cities, chaos was the rule of the day. Americans tended to be a nation of people who lived out of grocery stores and the supply of groceries soon dried up. Several western Governors had declared martial law, backed by the White House, but their states were disaster zones.

"Ok, one cabin or two?" Steve asked.

"Let's start off by building one large 2-story cabin," Ray suggested. "Did you get the attachment for the chainsaw so we can square up the logs, or are we going to build a real log cabin?"

"We can cut slabs, Ray," Steve replied. "I tossed in a couple of boxes of nails before we left Vegas."

"I don't suppose you put in a couple of windows, did you?" Ray asked.

"No, but there's a roll of screening so we can cut windows and leave them open during the summer," Steve responded.

"Since we don't have any insulation, how about we use 2x12 studs?" Ray suggested. "That would give us 12" of dead air space between the inner and out walls."

“There is a roll of plastic sheeting so we can put in a vapor barrier,” Steve pointed out. “If we don’t have air moving inside the walls, 12” of dead air should give us some insulation.”

It didn’t turn out to be nearly that bad. Truckee, CA was once a timber town and they were able to buy the building materials they needed. All of which was possible because they had cleaned out their bank accounts before ever leaving Vegas. You may recall that Ray paid the Christmas bonuses in cash or gold and always took his in gold, or so he claimed. Donner Pass, a legendary railroad site since the construction of the first transcontinental railroad in the 1860s, has recorded measurable snow every month of the year, with depths measured in dozens of feet many winters.

In 1846 the Donner Party, consisting of 89 men, women and children followed a branch of the Emigrant trail known as the California Trail to the Truckee area in order to attempt a crossing of Donner Pass. They arrived in late October but the heavy snows had already begun, making it impossible to continue. Their fascinating story may be learned by visiting the Donner Memorial State Park, west of Truckee on Donner Pass Road, near the east end of Donner Lake. The Donner Party was trapped by 22’ of snow and that was just a bad winter, not the aftermath of a super volcano eruption.

Steve and Ray didn’t have near enough cash to buy everything they needed. They were fortunate enough to find insulation, windows, and enough furniture to get by. They managed to put in a septic system and to seal in the 2-story cabin before the snow began to fall. They finished off the inside of the cabin during the early winter. With the cabin on the lake, they pumped water into a holding tank in the attic to meet their water needs. It was about as far from luxury as you could get, but they had running water and indoor plumbing.

“Perfect location,” Ray told the others. “I figure we’re going to get at least 20’ of snow this winter. That should keep the bad guys away.”

“What bad guys?” June asked. “Nobody said anything about bad guys.”

“I think that Ray is talking about the Mutant Zombie Bikers,” Steve laughed.

“What’s a mutant zombie biker?” Susan asked.

“Survivalist shorthand for the creeps who come out of the woodwork whenever there’s a disaster,” Ray explained. “You never read any survivalist fiction, I take it?”

“Not really, no,” both of the ladies admitted.

“Most survivalist fiction stories assume a disaster of monumental proportions and a total collapse of society as we know it,” Ray explained. “The two of you saw all of the people at the Fallen Leaf Lake Campground where we met you. Try to imagine what happened

after we left and they started to run out of food. Why did you ladies leave Reno in the first place?"

"We could see the handwriting on the wall," Susan replied. "Reno was being flooded by people and there wasn't enough food to go around for very long."

"And the two of you went looking for a better opportunity, right?" Ray continued.

"Right and we saw two single guys with pickups pulling trailers," June replied. "The two of you seemed to be better prepared than anyone else in the campground and we decided to try our luck."

"And?" Steve asked.

"Considering how we made our living, it wasn't any sacrifice to go with the two of you," Susan continued. "Then Steve and I got to visiting and the truth pretty much came out. When you gave us the choice of staying without having to put out, it changed everything. We've worked our butts off pulling our own weight around here."

"Not completely," Steve laughed looking at Susan's bottom.

"So, was the sex an accommodation or did it mean something?" Ray asked.

"Maybe in the beginning it was one thing and now it's another," June replied.

"Maybe?" Ray asked.

"I can't speak for Susan," June replied. "It means something to me."

"I'm not completely sure it was ever an accommodation as far as I'm concerned," Susan explained. "You've both been perfect gentlemen in that regard. You said no strings and you meant it."

"So are we going to share and share alike?" Ray asked.

"Forget it, Ray," they replied in unison.

"Good, now that that's settled, what's for dinner?" Ray continued without missing a beat.

From the outset, Susan had latched onto Steve with a vengeance and she wasn't sharing herself with Ray or Steve with June. She'd made that very clear to her friend before June had ever confessed to Ray and Steve. As far as personalities went, the pairing was perfect anyway. Ray and June were both very outgoing and she was a bit more reserved like Steve was. The girls had agreed that this was probably the last, and possibly the best, opportunity they had at having any type of normal life. Like I said earlier, sometimes dumb-luck beat the hell out of the other 5 kinds of luck.

◦

Everyone has a right to make a living. We can't all be the CEO of Disney. Come to think of it, neither can Michael Eisner. What difference does it make how you earn a living, as long as it's legal? The ladies turned out to have more character than many probably thought possible. Some people just can't get beyond the book's cover. Other people aren't so hasty to judge. Maybe spending 2 years locked up in a cell for something you didn't do changes a person's character, too. Anyway you sliced the apple; the women had earned their place in that cabin and they had the calluses on their hands to prove it. Not on their butts as some might have thought. Sorry to disappoint you. It was going to take hard people to live in a country that ended up being dusted all the way to Ohio.

It brings to mind an old joke about a man and a woman. He asked if she'd sleep with him for a million dollars and she said, sure. Then he asked if she'd sleep with him for a quarter and she asked, what do you think I am? He replied that they already established that and they were just negotiating the price. Hookers were probably more realistic about many things than most people in the country. They knew what they really did for a living, unlike many bankers or politicians. Unlike most of the world, Americans were caught in the limbo between being puritans and being practical.

◦

Carl Sagan would have been happy, his predictions about a nuclear winter proved to be true even without the nuclear weapons. Americans had been through this before back when it was a far younger country. The eruption of Krakatau in August of 1883 lowered temperature worldwide and they didn't return to normal until 1888. The stratospheric cloud of dust also contained large volumes of sulfur dioxide gas emitted from Krakatau. These gas molecules rapidly combined with water vapor to generate sulfuric acid droplets in the high atmosphere. The resulting veil of acidic aerosols and volcanic dust provided an atmospheric shield capable of reflecting enough sunlight to cause global temperatures to drop by several degrees. This aerosol-rich veil also generated spectacular optical effects over 70% of the earth's surface. For several years after the 1883 eruption, the earth experienced exotic colors in the sky, halos around the sun and moon, and a spectacular array of anomalous sunsets and sunrises.

There were plenty of the MZB's around but why should they go charging through 25' of snow to get what they could take for free? Spring of 2008 was a different matter entirely. The dust cloud was gone and so was most of the food. People with seeds planted gardens. Others went scavenging, found seeds and planted gardens. Still others decided to take what they wanted. And, if some of them got killed in the process, so what? That just meant that there was more to go around for the others.

Lake Van Norden is off the highway slightly and it's a small lake. Why bother with a small lake when you have Donner Lake just up the road a few miles? Nestled as it was on the far side (southern) of the lake, the cabin wasn't obvious to the casual observer.

When Ray and Steve bought the things they needed in Truckee, they told people they lived by the lake. No doubt most of the residents of Truckee assumed they meant Donner Lake.

Over the course of the winter, the four of them found that the wood-burning stove heated the cabin very efficiently but wasn't much of a cooking stove. The nearest large cities were Reno and Sacramento. They drove down to Sacramento and found a Canadian Baker's Choice Cook Stove complete with reservoir and optional hot water coil. They also picked up extra sets of firebricks because they were available. They also laid in a large supply of quart canning jars and lots of lids. They got a pressure canner from Sears and headed back to Truckee.

Acquisition of the stove gave them a reservoir of hot water and piped hot water for the bathtub. When they got back from Sacramento and had the stove installed and hooked up to supply hot water, the four of them planted a garden. Absent a well to supply water and since the Berkey water filters were illegal in California, their next trip was up to Reno. There, they bought a Crown Berkey and spare filter elements. In all candor, neither Ray nor Steve ever thought they'd end up building a cabin in Donner Pass. Most of the available wood was pine or fir and pine wasn't the best choice for firewood. They used what they had, no way were they getting very far from the cabin, especially once the weather warmed up.

In late June 2008 they heard gunfire from up the road. The MZB's had finally gotten around to hitting Truckee, of that they were relatively certain. Even with modern rifles and lots of ammo, 4 people couldn't risk riding to Truckee's rescue. Steve took a CB handheld radio and headed cross-country to try and find out what was happening in town.

"Ray, can you hear me?" Steve radioed.

"I copy, what's happening," Ray replied.

"I count about 30 vehicles and there are people lined up in the street under close guard," Steve reported.

"How many guards can you see?" Ray asked.

"Umm, more than 20 and they have assault type weapons," Steve reported.

"Is there anything we could do that would make a difference?" Ray radioed back.

"Negative, there are too many of them," Steve replied.

"Come back to the cabin Steve and we'll go back to town when the bad guys leave," Ray responded.

“Damn. Ok, I’m coming back,” Steve radioed back.

“It might have been different if we had sniper rifles with suppressors,” Ray told Steve when he got back to the cabin. “Let’s face it, all we have is a couple of M16A1’s, 4 FAL rifles, 2 shotguns, 2 M1911’s and a couple of .22’s. It’s not like we really have the things we need to run the type of operation it would take for 4 people to take on up to 120 people.”

“I hate leaving them in their present situation,” Steve shook his head.

“And I don’t?” Ray snapped. “You do what you can do and get away with and you walk away when you can’t. As it is, the girls are only basically familiar with the FAL rifles and it would be too risky to put them in harm’s way until they’re totally up to speed.”

“I still have most of my money,” Steve said, “We should have bought some sniper rifles when we were in Reno.”

“Maybe we should have, but we didn’t, did we, partner?” Ray pointed out. “Maybe after this is over, we can make another trip to Reno and see about buying some good rifles with good scopes. Here’s a KaBar knife, I already gave one to each of the girls.”

The MZB’s cleaned out Truckee, abused the women and left town headed, according to one resident, to South Lake Tahoe. Ray and Mike took the time to get Susan and June totally familiar with the FAL rifles and let them to tend the gardens while they made a trip back to Reno about a month later. They went to The Gun Trader and bought 2 Springfield Armory Super Match rifles and had each fitted with scope and a suppressor. The rifles were very expensive and the scopes and suppressors all but put them out of reach on their dwindling supply of money. However, they did pick up 2 good used M1911’s for Susan and June and some Match ammo for the M1A’s. The dealer only had a half dozen 20 round magazines and they took those and extra 10-round magazines. They also picked up ALICE gear for the ladies, including web belt, suspenders, magazine pouches, leather flap holster, 2 canteens with a stove and a canteen cup and a fanny pack.

“There you go ladies, now you can dress up like GI Jane,” Ray kidded.

“I am not going to cut my hair off,” Susan snapped. “Why did you guys go to Reno and buy more rifles?”

“These are far more accurate and have silencers,” Steve explained.

“I don’t suppose you bought us some sanitary supplies while you were in Reno, did you?” June asked.

“I did too,” Ray replied. “You mentioned you were getting low and I bought all I could find. It’s not like they’re getting regular shipments of anything yet.”

“Tampons or pads?” Susan asked.

“Both, neither one of us really knows much about that sort of thing,” Ray admitted. “Like I said, Susan, we bought what they had.”

“Well, that’s probably more than most guys would have done, Susan” June said.

“How’s the garden coming?” Steve changed the subject.

“Up,” Susan laughed.

“Here’s the Ball Blue Book on canning so we can figure out how to do that,” Steve offered a book.

“You two don’t seem to be very well prepared for a couple of survivalists,” June said.

“We didn’t exactly plan on the world ending and we most certainly didn’t plan on running into the two of you,” Ray countered. “We’re doing very well under the circumstances. We have food, shelter, 2 good looking, hard-working companions and all those sacrifices we made getting ready weren’t in vain. Hell, we even had enough money on hand to cover the things we didn’t plan on needing.”

“We do have one major problem,” Steve pointed out. “We’re running low on those survival food supplies and we don’t have anywhere to store meat if we go hunting.”

“We need to build an icehouse, partner,” Ray suggested. “If we make sure we don’t get trapped in the cabin this year, we can harvest blocks of ice from the lake. There’s plenty of sawdust for insulation. Then we can go hunting and stock the larder. When I was a child, vacationing with my family on the Massachusetts coast, I wondered why some of the larger houses near the shore had porches on the roofs. They were, I was told, not porches. They were called Widow’s Walks. From that higher place the wife of a seafarer could watch for the return of her man from the far places of the world. Often the ships – and the men – did not return, but when they did the women who loved them and waited for them wanted to know as soon as possible that this most precious cargo of all had arrived in the harbor. So each day they climbed to the tops of their houses, to the widow’s walks, to watch. If we add a Widow’s Walk to the top of the cabin, we’ll never be trapped again,” Ray continued.

Title 18 – Chapter 5 – The Horde

The folks in Truckee finally figured out they were staying at Lake Van Norden and not Donner Lake. They understood why the 4 people didn't come riding to their rescue. Some of the residents had been shot trying to protect their wives. The really smart women hadn't resisted the attackers' attentions and they'd been able to walk away from the experience physically intact. Now, everyone in Truckee was carrying some sort of firearm, everywhere.

Over the summer Ray and Steve constructed the Widow's Walk and a large icehouse. They also harvested timber and had a huge pile of firewood. There were several things they never realized they needed: skis, snowshoes, parkas and mittens. This forced them to tap Ray's supply of Maple Leafs. Northern California was spared the destruction of southern California. Some areas had large Hispanic populations that meant they could find something to eat, only if it was beans, rice and grits. The garden finally began producing vegetables and the girls learned how to can from the Ball Blue Book.

Word filtered back to Truckee that that group that had assaulted the town had gone against the wrong town on the other side of the state line and gotten their come-up-pence. To protect their town, the residents had barricaded and were guarding the off ramps on I-80.

Truckee is a town located in Nevada County, California. As of the 2000 census, the town had a total population of 13,864. Truckee's population has the potential to surge to 40,000 people in less than ten years as a result of increased development of previously forested lands in areas such as Martis Valley and the CA-267 corridor. However, the majority would most likely be vacationers, which would keep Truckee's year-round population relatively the same. Interestingly enough, while Truckee residents generally do not like the plan, it is the greater Nevada County area and the Board of Supervisors who is approving the build permits.

Truckee is located at 39°20'32" North, 120°12'13" West (39.342163, -120.203568).

According to the US Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 87.7 km² (33.8 mi²). 84.3 km² (32.5 mi²) of it is land and 3.4 km² (1.3 mi²) of it is water. The total area is ~3.87% water and is near Lake Tahoe. Truckee is about 100 miles northeast of Sacramento and 32 miles southwest of Reno.

- Truckee is famous for its annual rodeo.
- Truckee is the home of Donner Lake and the Donner Lake State Park and Museum
- Truckee grew as a railroad town. The railroad goes into downtown Truckee and the Amtrak passenger lines still stop there on the services from Chicago to San Francisco.
- The four closest large ski resorts to Truckee are Squaw Valley, Northwoods, Alpine Meadows and Boreal.

How did 120 people manage to take down Truckee? Superior firepower? The willingness to use their assault rifles, rather than waiving them around? Maybe it was the presence of automatic weapons. They came, they left, and they got killed. There seemed to be a whole lot of the latter going around. The year was 2008, not 1846. The situation was bad and getting worse. FEMA finally made it to Truckee, for all of about 2 hours. They seemed to be concerned that Truckee had erected barricades on the I-80 off ramps. It became apparent that FEMA had 2 things to offer: bad advice and no food.

They had the world by the tail. Except. Susan was pregnant; they were out of meat; they couldn't find any game to kill and the real MZB horde showed up. Roused out of sleep by the roar of gunfire coming from Truckee, Steve grabbed his new M1A rifle and the handheld CB radio.

"Are you there?" Steve radioed.

"10-4."

"Who is on this channel?" someone asked.

"2 by 3," Steve radioed and Ray changed from channel 14 to 21.

"They must have CB's, partner," Ray radioed.

"Click, click."

"How many?"

"Hundreds, get ready to bug out."

"Click, click."

Ray quickly got the gals around and passed out the gear while Steve made it back to the cabin.

"What's going on?" Susan asked.

"Several people are attacking Truckee," Steve replied. "Are you ready to go, Ray?"

Susan ran to the stool to empty her stomach. The men made sure they had what food they could carry and plenty of 7.62 ammo. June got dressed and helped Susan get ready. When they were finally set, they took off headed southwest. Susan wasn't traveling well and it took them the better part of 2 hours to pick up Soda Springs Road. It is very rough country south of Donner Pass.

"Wait," Susan called out, "I have to rest again."

“Five minutes, then we have to get moving,” Ray replied.

“Look” Steve said pointing, “Isn’t that our cabin?”

“Was our cabin, you mean,” Ray grimaced.

The party of 4 joined Soda Springs Road where it straightens out before climbing the mountain using a series of switchbacks. They paused and rested and began the trek up the mountain, stopping frequently to allow Susan to rest or toss her cookies. When they got to the Cedars, they stopped and built a campfire. Susan couldn’t go another step and they were tired and hungry. Steve got out his Space Blanket and wrapped it around Susan while June started hot water using their canteen cups.

“That tears it,” Steve suggested. “We just lost about everything we had. Where does this road go, Ray?”

“It winds its way down to I-80 about halfway to Sacramento,” Ray replied. “Or, we can cut cross-country and work our way over to Lake Tahoe. It’s rough country either way we go. We’re not that far from a junction where a fire road goes east. About 2½ to 3 miles beyond the end of the fire road, we can pick up another road that will get us closer to Tahoe and 6 miles beyond that we’ll be at the lake. We should hit the lake just south of Carnelian Bay.”

“Won’t we cross 89?” Steve asked.

“Do you really want to risk walking on a major thoroughfare?”

“We might not have a choice, Susan isn’t doing too well,” Steve replied.

“Steve, we can move slowly, but we really have to keep moving,” Ray pointed out. “I’m guessing that we probably only have enough food for a few days.”

“Susan and I can stay here,” June offered.

“That’s not an option, girl,” Ray replied. “We’re all in this together, for better or worse. We’ll wait to move until Susan is feeling better. You might try making her some tea to settle her stomach.”

The hot tea seemed to settle Susan’s stomach a little and a while later, they resumed their journey. They stopped at the junction to let Susan rest and then walked to the end of the fire road and rested again. Ray suggested that they move until they lost the light and that might have them close to the creek that would lead them to 89. Susan was better and they made it the 2½ miles to the creek and set up camp. They used the heaters to warm the MRE’s and fuel tabs to boil water for tea and coffee.

The next morning when they got up, Susan was already in the grips of her morning sickness so they stayed put until it passed. Around 11am they began to follow the creek down to 89. The men had their full ALICE setup and two rifles each, the FAL and the M1A. Steve was also carrying Susan's FAL and he couldn't move any faster than she could. And when they got to 89, like it or not, they headed south on 89. With the last of their energy and failing light, they made it cross-country from 89 to Burton Creek State Park and camped. Burton Creek State Park covers 2,000 acres of land on the outskirts of Tahoe City. Six miles of unpaved roadway are available for hiking and cross-country skiing. Summer temperatures range from about 75 degrees during the day to the low 40s at night, and winter temperatures average from a high of 40 to a low of 20 degrees.

After dinner, Steve noticed Ray unpacking his ALICE pack.

"What are you doing?" Steve asked.

"I'm leaving behind the things that I won't need," Ray replied. "I'm going to get some sleep and later tonight move down to Tahoe City and find a vehicle to steal. I'll take the vehicle back up to Truckee and find out what is going on there. Now, according to the topo map there's a cabin not far from here. Tomorrow you take the girls and find that cabin. Take this while you're at it."

"What's that?" Steve asked.

"It's the rest of my gold coins, Steve," Ray replied. "You and the girls might need them if something happens to me."

"Are you sure this is a good idea?" Steve asked.

"No, but it's all I can come up with," Ray replied. "If we stay here, we're going to run out of food. That reminds me, Steve do you remember the girls looking for 100# of beans and 100# of rice?"

"Yes, what about it them?" Steve asked.

"I put them in that big pile of firewood so we do have some food back at the cabin," Ray smiled.

"As long as we're telling secrets," Steve said, "I put about half of the ammo and the M16's out in the smokehouse."

"I know, I found them," Ray laughed. "That's where I got the idea to stash some of the food. Take my rolls of silver, just in case."

"Just in case what?" June asked.

"Just in case I get delayed," Ray replied.

“Don’t get delayed for too long or Steve will have all of the company he can handle,” June pouted.

“Find that cabin and use the gold and silver to trade with the people in Tahoe City to get food and the things you need,” Ray instructed Steve, ignoring June’s little outburst.

“How long do you figure to be gone?” Steve asked.

“24-36 hours,” Ray replied. “I can’t get too close to Truckee with the vehicle so I’ll have to hoof it part of the way. “If I can get there by dawn, it will give me until dark to check things out and then after dark I’ll come back to that cabin. If I’m not back in 48-hours, what happens after is up to you.”

“Ok, I’ll see you tomorrow night,” Steve replied.

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Steve found the cabin the next morning on his topo map and set out to find it. It was about a mile from where they were camping and he went back and got the girls. He hadn’t heard any gunshots during the night so he hoped that boded well for Ray and his little adventure. After he got the girls settled in at the cabin, he walked down into Tahoe City to see if he could use the silver coins to buy them some food. The folks in Tahoe City were a little alarmed because someone had stolen a pickup during the middle of the night. Steve explained that he, his wife and her girlfriend were staying in the cabin in the State Park and they were running short of food.

He was able to buy pinto beans, rice and some chili seasoning using quarters and half dollars. He introduced himself as Matthew Helm and when asked had the ID to verify his identity he presented his Nevada ID. He told the people that they’d had to flee from the Truckee area and that a large group of bad guys was in the town raising hell. He suggested to the people in Tahoe City that they might be well served to put up some kind of guard force. A local Deputy, name Williams, ran his Nevada ID through his computer and it came back clean so they let Steve go back to the park. Steve had left the FAL rifle with the girls, just in case.

“I hope the two of you like chili,” Steve laughed. “I was able to get beans and rice and some chili seasoning.”

“Chili beats MRE’s but not by much,” June laughed. “Will Ray be back tonight?”

“Probably, unless he got delayed by something,” Steve replied. “How are you feeling Susan?”

“Better now but awful earlier,” she replied.

“When I was in Tahoe City I told them that I was in the State Park with my wife and girlfriend in case anyone shows up here at the cabin,” Steve explained.

“That would be nice,” Susan replied.

“What would be nice, Susan?” Steve asked.

“If we could get married and the baby has a proper family,” she replied.

“That’s fine with me,” Steve replied. “We can see one of the ministers’ when we get back to Truckee. I know that’s not much of a proposal, do you want me to get down on my knee and ask?”

“I accept, and don’t bother,” Susan smiled broadly.

“Well, look at you,” June kidded, “Sandra Bullock is getting married.”

“That was then, June and I’m using my real name now,” Susan replied.

“I had to use the Matt Helm identity in Tahoe City,” Steve explained. “A Deputy Sheriff ran my ID through his computer and it came back clean. So if anyone asks, you’re Mrs. Helm. It won’t be a problem, because I noticed you both forgot your purses.”

“Left them behind intentionally, Steve,” June said. “But with the cabin burning down, I guess that means we get to start over.”

“I never asked and I’m sure it’s none of my business, but how did the two of you happen to become professional entertainers?” Steve commented.

“My father helped himself from the time I was about 10 years old,” June replied. “I ran away from home when I was 16 and it was what I had to do to survive.”

“Sorry,” Steve responded.

“Anyway I took a bus from California to Reno and when I got off the bus, this guy picked me up and paid a lot of attention to me and bought me a new wardrobe. The next thing I knew, he had me on the street. Well, not at first, but when the shine wore off, that’s where I ended up. After I’d been there a while, Susan showed up and the same thing happened to her.”

“My story was a little different,” Susan continued, “At least the beginning. I lived in a small California town and went out on a date with the coach’s son, our local football star. The SOB raped me and when I reported it no one believed I was raped. There were innuendos in the local paper that it was consensual and that I’d teased the guy and changed my mind after we were done. He was a senior and I was a sophomore and

it got so bad in town, I ran away. When I got off the bus in Reno the story became the same as June's, and it was even the same guy."

"The pimp got in a fight and got killed," June explained. "The two of us went on our own and set ourselves up as high class girls. What's your story and why the phony name?"

"I worked for a construction firm in LA," Steve began. "After 9/11 and the Patriot Act was passed, I found myself in a situation. A guy named George and I were up for a promotion. I got it, he didn't and he laid some lies on the FBI about me being involved with terrorist fund raising. The next thing you know, I'm in handcuffs being asked questions about all kinds of things. I had the M16 rifle of mine, only at that time it was converted to semi auto, and some high capacity magazines in a locker in San Fernando. The FBI told me that I had the right to remain silent so I did. Eventually the ACLU got involved after I sat under arrest at the federal correction facility in Long Beach for a couple of years. I changed my name and ended up working for Ray."

"Bad luck," June said.

"Bad choices," Steve countered. "I spent 2 years locked up all because I wouldn't own up to having an illegal weapon in California. And now, I carry the label of traitor."

"What ever happened to the guy who ratted you out?" Susan asked.

"He turned up in Vegas looking for a job from Ray," Steve explained. "I had the beard and he didn't recognize me. We gave George the keys to the shop and put him in charge when we bugged out of Vegas after the Caldera blew."

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Ray found an old pickup and was able to hotwire it. He took off for Truckee and made it to 3 miles south of town on 89 in nothing flat. He parked the truck at Cabin Creek Road and took off on foot towards Truckee. 89 hits I-80 right in the heart of town and Ray went to ground and began to keep a watch. He was positioned so he could see across I-80 and avoid being observed himself. It appeared that most of the MZB's were gone. During the course of the day, Ray counted maybe a dozen. Since he had his sniper rifle and felt a little guilty that they hadn't done anything the last time to stop what happened, he waited until dark and moved to the north side of I-80. Ray took out 8 of the guys before they were able to discover where he was hiding. They came at him and he took off, heading back for his pickup. About 2 miles south of Truckee, they caught up with him and stitched him good with an M16.

Ray came to later and he was hurting pretty badly. The bad guys must have thought they'd killed him because of the amount of blood. Ray was able to bandage both of his arms where the slugs went through and he started to make his way back to his pickup. He hadn't been killed because he was wearing a level IIIA vest, something he'd picked up in Vegas to wear when he made late night runs to the bank. He made it about ½ the

way to the truck before he passed out. He came to the following morning and was able to get to the pickup before he passed out again. Just before sundown, Ray came to a third time. He figured he must have lost a lot of blood and drank both canteens of water. The next time Ray came to the sun was just coming up. He fired up the pickup and headed back to the park where he was supposed to meet the others.

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“He wasn’t here last night and he’s not here this morning,” June complained. “Where is he?”

“June he said 24-36 hours but to give him 48,” Steve said. “Ray can take care of himself.”

“It’s been 36 hours Steve, I’m worried,” June responded.

“If he’s not back tonight, he said I’d be in charge,” Steve explained. “I’d prefer to give him until this time tomorrow. If he doesn’t show up by then, I go looking.”

“You said you told a Deputy about the bad guys being in Truckee, right?” Susan asked.

“That’s right Susan,” Steve confirmed. “A Deputy named Williams. Maybe they had to get additional resources before they went to Truckee.”

“And maybe he just ignored you,” June retorted.

“I’ll ask him tomorrow when I go into Tahoe City,” Steve replied.

Time doesn’t move at a fixed rate. When you’re waiting for something to happen, the clock usually slows down. It slows down to the point where a minute seems like an hour and an hour is a lifetime. As the time passed, Steve became concerned too. He was beginning to think that he was wrong to let Ray go off to Truckee by himself. Self-recrimination leads to guilt and guilt is a bad thing when you have responsibilities. The following morning, Steve had made his mind up to go to town and see the Deputy when Ray pulled in driving an old pickup. After he stopped the pickup, Ray didn’t get out and Steve went to see what the holdup was. When he saw the condition that Ray was in, he pushed Ray to the passenger side of the vehicle and headed to town. Deputy Williams pulled him over for driving a stolen truck.

“Deputy, I have a wounded man in the pickup that I was bringing to town for treatment,” Steve tried to explain.

Williams cuffed him and checked the pickup. When he saw Ray covered with blood, he got on the radio and got an ambulance. He put Steve in the back of his car and hauled him to South Lake Tahoe. They took Steve’s prints and locked him in a cell. Ray went to

the hospital to have his injuries attended to. 4 hours later, the Deputy came back and let Steve out of the cell. He led him to an interrogation room and told him to sit down.

"We seem to have a problem," Williams said.

"My prints came back as Steve Henry, didn't they?" Steve asked.

"That's right but there aren't any warrants on you so how do you explain having 2 identities?" Williams asked.

"Do you remember back 5 years or so when a guy was accused of being involved with a terrorist group in LA?" Steve asked. "It was in all of the papers and the case went well up the court system before I was finally released."

"ACLU got you off?" Williams asked.

"That's right," Steve replied.

"Where there's smoke there's fire," Williams said.

"So say you and 1/2 the people in the country, Deputy," Steve replied. "The only thing I did wrong was to beat a guy out of a promotion and he concocted that story to get me in trouble and get the promotion himself."

"I remember now," Williams said. "You refused to cooperate with the authorities."

"Yes I did Deputy Williams," Steve admitted. "I had an AR-15 and a bunch of high capacity magazines in storage in a locker in San Fernando and didn't want to get busted for having an illegal weapon. They told me I had the right to remain silent so I did."

"What's the story on the pickup?" Williams asked.

"Several nights ago a large group of bad guys hit Truckee," Steve explained. "The four of us took off cross-country and made it to the State Park. Truckee had been hit once before and some people hurt and we did nothing to help. My buddy Ray decided that he had to get back to Truckee and find out what was happening. He stole the truck and drove up there almost 72-hours ago. I have no idea what happened after that. He turned up this morning all shot up and I brought him into town to get him help. That's when you arrested me."

"Your buddy is going to be ok," Williams said. "He's lost a lot of blood but the wounds weren't all that bad, considering. He was wearing a level IIIA bulletproof vest. The Sheriff said that under the circumstances they'd let him off with a warning. Your friend killed 8 of those bad guys up in Truckee."

“By the time we got enough people around to effect a rescue, the people in town had taken out the other 4,” Williams continued. “The bad guys burned your cabin down, you know.”

“We saw the flames,” Steve replied.

“What happened to the guy that concocted that story?” Williams asked.

“I don’t really know, Deputy,” Steve replied. “He was working for Ray when the Caldera exploded and we left him in charge of the business when we bugged out of Vegas.”

“He’s probably dead,” Williams said. “Vegas got hit really bad by the ash from that eruption. Ok, you’re free to go. You can get your property and we can either give you a ride to the park or over to the hospital.”

“I need to go get the girls and get them to the hospital,” Steve replied.

“They’re already there,” Williams said. “Your friend will be there for a couple of days. The people in Truckee really appreciate what your friend did to get rid of those criminals. They said that there is an empty house in Truckee that you’re free to use. Before you leave are there any other surprises that I should be aware of?”

“We have some FAL rifles, Deputy,” Steve replied.

“So do half the people in El Dorado County,” Williams laughed. “It’s all but impossible to enforce so after the big bang we finally gave up. Keep the magazine out of that pistol of yours while you are in town.”

“Do you have preachers here?” Steve asked.

“It would be quicker to go across the line into Nevada,” Williams said.

Purists will note that they took Steve to South Lake Tahoe even though he was arrested in Tahoe City, which is in Placer County. The County Seat for Placer County is in Auburn. Auburn was on the far side of the County and Ray needed immediate medical treatment. The County Seat for El Dorado County is in Placerville, which wasn’t convenient either, being just down the road from Auburn.

The most serious offense that Deputy Williams could charge Steve with would have been having a loaded gun inside of Tahoe City or for offering a false ID to a peace officer. It has always been my experience, even in California, that rural Deputies tend to focus on the big things and gloss over that little stuff. Besides, how would it look with Ray being a genuine hero of sorts? Or, maybe a dumb idiot? There isn’t much difference between a hero and an idiot, you know. The ID wasn’t false; it was just a second legitimate ID under an assumed identity. I wonder if the ACLU could get you off on that charge? Nah... The location used to shoot the Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston

movie, 'The Bodyguard' was Fallen Leaf Lake. 'Indian Love Call', starring Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy, was the first movie to be filmed at Lake Tahoe in the 1920's.

As soon as Ray was released from the hospital, he stood up for Steve in Reno where Steve and Susan went to get married. Then, Ray got to feeling guilty again and asked June to marry him. June made Ray promise not to go looking for trouble again before she'd say yes. Ray lied and promised, breaking Rule One.

When they came back from Reno, they moved into a house in Truckee that came complete with an outside door on the second floor. They went down to the cabin and recovered the rifles and ammo from the smokehouse and the beans and rice from the woodpile. Then they spent several days moving the pile of wood to their new used house in Truckee, which just happened to come furnished. Two Maple Leafs replaced all of their personal possessions and then some. Two more replaced the ammo burned up in the fire. They didn't lose much else and they settled down in Truckee to enjoy life after the big bang. Rule One – Don't Lie. Rule Two – Don't Make Promises You Can't Keep.

Title 18 – Chapter 6 – Going Home

Not to put too fine of a point on the pencil, BUT, there's a difference between promises you make with the intention of keeping them and the promises you make never intending to keep. Ray had a chance to think about what June had asked before he made a decision; maybe not a lot of time, but enough. Those bullet wounds really hurt and he'd be dead except for the vest. He'd had enough to last him a lifetime so when he promised he'd meant it. There was an aftermath to deal with. Steve didn't have a vest and wondered aloud why Ray had never said anything. Steve had 2 identities that had been established.

"I have 4 sets of papers and credit cards to go with each one," Ray had said.

"They're genuine Passports that are hot around the edges and they have to hack the system and upload the data. It's purely optional as far as I'm concerned, but it is available."

Ray had implied they were stolen genuine passports and he knew someone who could hack the government computer and put them in the database. But, Ray said they not he. And, genuine credit cards for each identity? Maybe one of the identities was in the name of Jason Bourne and another in the name of James Bond? Or, how about a name ending in a vowel? The government hires all the hackers just to try and make their computers hack proof. It's something to think about, isn't it? In the movie *Eraser* Arnold had access to all kinds of records.

*John Kruger works for the witness relocation program as a US Marshal. His job is to remove all traces of the identity of any witness in the program and to, as called for, eliminate threats against any of those witnesses. John works alone and is the best at what he does. Remember? Probably not a vowel, he says *ca pish eh* not *i*. It's a northeastern Nevada kind of thing. Anyway, he's into FAL's and .45's, not 9mm's. Glock sort of sounds like something a German would say when his sausage is giving him gas. (Appropriate at the time, I was teasing Fleataxi.)*

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Living in town had a downside – it was boring. Plus the word was getting around that Truckee was bad for your health. Truckee had a couple of crazy snipers running around with Springfield Armory Super Match M1A rifles with fancy scopes. And the Major and the City Council told the story to anyone they could get to listen. They figured the publicity might help to keep the roving gangs away. They got a slogan that said, "Nice to Live Here – Bad to Visit."

Then FEMA showed up with a tractor-trailer full of food: beans, rice, flour, sugar, coffee and vitamins. That was followed a few days later by a second semi bringing canned goods: ham, spam, vegetables and fruit. Alarmed at Truckee's attempt to build a reputation as a bad place to visit, Arnold sent in 2 Platoons of CNG.

A 7.3 earthquake accompanied the eruption and there was speculation that the after-shocks indicated that the Caldera was refilling with magma. Scientists dismissed the speculation, asserting that the new Caldera was just settling. Scientists and especially geologists loved the west coast of the US. It had earthquake faults, Calderas, active volcanoes and all kinds of play pretties for the scientists. Strike-slip faults, subduction zones, you name it and you could find it on the west coast. California wasn't going to fall off into the Pacific because the San Andreas was a strike-slip fault. Someday LA would make it to San Francisco, according to projections.

The night of 17 August marks the anniversary of a little talked about yet profoundly significant earthquake known as the Hebgen Lake, or Montana-Yellowstone Earthquake. The event took place in 1959 in a remote...but well visited region around West Yellowstone, Montana. On that night nearly 18,000 campers and park personnel, felt a shock that had originated ten miles below the surface in the vicinity of the Madison River Canyon. As a result of that intensity 7.1 earthquake, 43 million cubic yards of rock slid as a block into the Madison Canyon damming up the Madison River, below Hebgen Dam. The lake basin behind Hebgen dam tilted with the south side rising and the north side dropping.

This caused a seiche...a lake tsunami...that crested the dam four times and kept the lake in motion for nearly 11 hours. At Yellowstone Park, hot springs and geysers, that had never been known to erupt before erupted. The shock wave was felt in an area of 500,000 square miles. It caused wells to fluctuate in Texas and as far away as Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Nine people lost their lives and 19 were listed as missing in this event. Displacement here was about 20 feet and ran hundreds of feet long.

Probably the most well-known and well-studied fault is the transcurrent (strike-slip) fault known as the San Andreas Fault of California. This fault marks the margin line between the Pacific and North American Plates. Movement on a strike strip fault is generally horizontal. On the surface, scarps form as hills crossing the fault zone are torn apart by movement over time. Actually anything crossing this fault zone is either slowly torn apart, or offset. Rivers crossing the fault line are called offset streams and are classic signatures of fault activity along the San Andreas. These faults can be very long; the San Andreas is nearly 600 miles long.

In the 1994 Northridge, California event, a deep thrust fault located about 18 km under the city of Los Angeles, produced an earthquake that registered a magnitude of 6.7. When thrust faults are exposed on the surface overburden material lies over the main block. They are normally associated with areas of folded surfaces and or mountainous regions. The dip angles of thrust faults are normally not as steep as a normal fault. Chief Mountain, in Montana is an example of a thrust mountain.

You didn't think that the explosive eruption at Long Valley stopped all of the other geological activity on the west coast, did you? The heart of all of America's scenic wonders was its active geological past, and present. And there they sat, 1½ miles above sea lev-

el in another of those geological wonders, the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Even the Mid-western plains weren't exempt, you've surely heard of the New Madrid Fault Zone haven't you? If everything in North America let loose at the same time, North America would end up with a landscape like the Moon. Imagine what would happen if the Long Valley Caldera erupted and triggered Yellowstone and the Cascade Volcano Range all the way from northern California to western Canada. The head of FEMA would probably resign, for starters.

◦

Rule Three: Don't go looking for Trouble. Trouble has a way of finding you.

"Can you make chili using spam?" June asked Ray.

"I've never tried that one, honey, maybe Steve and I had better get the rifles and go hunting," Ray replied.

California has a vast population of game: antelope, deer, elk, wild pig, chukar, dove, sage grouse, quail, and waterfowl. In Nevada County (Truckee), you could find deer, wild pig, turkey and squirrels. Squirrels took as much work as deer and they didn't go very far. It was rugged country and tough hunting. Steve and Ray hunted until the first major snowfall and got a deer, a boar and 3 turkeys. 10 hours per day for a month. It sure was a shame FEMA couldn't bring in a truckload of beef.

They had electricity in Truckee so Ray bought a freezer at Sears in Sacramento. It was on the long side of being empty. But they had vehicles and it wasn't that hard to find cattle. That only took a day and they had one hell of a lot more meat than they got from 30 days of hunting. And there went 2 more of Ray's gold coins. Steve should have opened the bag and counted the coins when he had the chance, but he didn't and only Ray knew the quantity of Maple Leafs were in the chamois bag. It was more than a few but not enough to buy a small town. And, it had to last because jobs were few and hard to find. Unless you wanted to volunteer to go to Vegas or Denver and help clean up the mess for room and board only. They only got 23' feet of snow and concluded that the winters were getting better. Truckee was safe until spring.

◦

Spring brought a melt-off and a new baby boy name Stephen Raymond Henry; 8 pounds, 2 ounces, mother and child were doing fine. Spring brought a trip to Vegas to see what was left of the business. Guess who? Steve had shaved off the beard.

"You!" George was flabbergasted.

"Hi George, have a good time minding the store?" Steve laughed.

(I can't repeat George's reply, but most of the words only contained 4 letters.)

“George, we thought you might be dead,” Ray said. “A Deputy up in South Lake Tahoe said that Vegas was hit pretty hard by that eruption.”

“The real trick was keeping the ash shoveled off the roof,” George reported. “It doesn’t rain very often but they told us that if the ash got wet the roof would collapse.”

“You obviously found the survival supplies I left behind,” Ray observed.

“I was beginning to wonder if the two of you made it through the ash cloud,” George replied.

George was single and it was obvious that George had camped out right there at the shop. The shop was spic and span so George must had kept the place clean to give him something to do.

“I’m sorry, Steve,” George said. “What I did was wrong.”

“Wrong doesn’t begin to describe it, George,” Steve snapped.

“Steve, chill out,” Ray advised.

“George, tell me how it feels to sit in a building day after day worrying about if you’ll ever get out,” Steve turned the dagger.

“Dammit, I said I was sorry, Steve and to answer your question, shitty,” George responded.

“I guess that I have you to thank for having a business to come back to,” Ray commented. “We’re both married now and living in Truckee. I wonder if my house is still standing?”

“I don’t think I’ll be going back to an efficiency apartment,” Steve laughed.

“George, could you put together a building crew?” Ray asked.

“The guys that survived, drifted back from time to time looking to see if you were back,” George replied. “I suppose I could find some people. I gave them gas and diesel fuel for free until it was all gone. They all owe you something.”

“Good, you’re now a foreman and I want you to get a crew and either clear off my lot or repair the house,” Ray announced. “Steve and I will go back to Truckee and get our wives and Steve’s new son.”

“What about my back wages?” George asked.

"I'll take care of those when I get back," Ray replied. "I have to do the business at the banks before I can pay you. Is there still food left from the survival supplies?"

"I can never look at another bean," George replied.

"Can you handle MRE's?" Steve asked.

"Anything has to be better than beans and rice," George smiled.

"Was there any trouble?" Ray asked.

"I found the shotgun, so there wasn't any trouble," George answered.

"We'll be back inside of a week," Ray explained. "It looks to me like there's plenty of work to do rebuilding Vegas."

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Construction is a year round activity in a town like Las Vegas. The casino that had withstood the onslaught of volcanic ash the best was the Luxor because it was built in the shape of a pyramid. Las Vegas was overbuilt in the extreme when it came to casinos. The city was home to eleven of the thirteen largest hotels in the world and over one million people. In addition Las Vegas had the advantage of no state income tax, low property taxes, low unemployment, and great weather almost year-round.

Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, Henderson, and Boulder City, covers 7,910 square miles, which is just a little larger than New Jersey. Las Vegas itself encompasses 91.76 square miles. It is located in the southern corner of Nevada, close to where it meets Arizona, and about 300 miles from Los Angeles and 600 miles from San Francisco. Population: 1,003,482; Average summer temperature: 86° F; Average winter temperature: 54° F.

Las Vegas is located at 36°11'39" North, 115°13'19" West (36.194168, -115.222060).

Las Vegas is sometimes called Sin City due to the popularity of legalized gambling, availability of alcoholic beverages any time of the day and night (like all of Nevada), various forms and degrees of adult entertainment, and legalized prostitution in nearby counties (Nevada law prohibits prostitution in counties which have large populations). The nickname favored by local government and promoters of tourism is The Entertainment Capital of the World. The city's glamorous image has made it a popular setting for films and television programs. Prostitutes continue to work in casinos, where they wait in bars and attempt to make contact with single males. Escort services offering sexual services are ubiquitous, apparently, with about 140 pages of the Las Vegas yellow pages devoted to "entertainers".

Two brothels in the US are or have been known as Chicken Ranch: one in Texas and another one in Nevada. Located in Fayette County, just outside the city limits of La Grange, the Chicken Ranch operated as an illegal but tolerated brothel from 1905 until 1973. It was established by Miss Jessie Williams. The name of the brothel derives from the fact that during the Great Depression, chickens were accepted as payment for sexual services.

In the early 1950's, Edna Milton began managing the house, eventually buying it after Miss Jessie had died in 1961. The prostitutes working at the Chicken Ranch underwent a criminal background check by the sheriff and weekly health checks by a doctor. They were not allowed to have outside social contacts with townspeople. The brothel bought supplies from local vendors on a rotating basis and was generally well-liked.

In 1973, Houston TV reporter Marvin Zindler forced the closure of the ranch after running a week-long special on it. The Sheriff of Fayette County, Jim Flournoy, armed with a petition opposing the closure and carrying 3,000 signatures, tried to meet the governor and revert the closure, but he was rebuffed.

The Texas Chicken Ranch is the basis for the 1978 Broadway musical and later movie *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, as well as the ZZ Top song *La Grange*. The facility in northern Nevada by the same name was a different and totally unrelated operation to the business in Texas. The owner of the facility in Nevada had gone to the Nevada Supreme Court to keep his facility open and had won. According to Wikipedia. They charged \$400 per hour in Nevada. I wonder what the real rate per hour was? (Not really, large numbers give me a headache.)

◦

Don't believe all those foolish old folks and their wives tales. Bad things come in three's? Hokus Pokus, foolishness, it never happens. How many of those earthquake things did they have down by Sumatra? Three? Sheer coincidence. They'll have another and that will make 4; no big deal. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen all at once. Get the generator and put the freezer in the trailer and fire up that generator to keep the meat cold. It is only 480 miles and you can make it in a day. You'll even get to drive by the east side of Long Valley Caldera and see the moonscape.

◦

"Where are we going to stay?" Susan asked.

"Las Vegas has more hotel and motel rooms than any other city in the world," Steve explained. "We'll stay in a hotel until we can find a home or build a new one, honey. Have you ever been to Vegas?"

"What and get arrested?" Susan asked. "They're on the lookout for Entertainers down in Vegas. It was never worth the trouble."

At least they were back in Nevada where they wouldn't raise many eyebrows having rifles with pistol grips and large capacity magazines. George had cleaned off Ray's lot and they were just waiting to begin construction. Ray had to secure operating capital for the business and file an insurance claim on his home.

With Allied's Special Form Homeowners Policy, your home and property are protected against many causes of loss:

Fire and lightning - Windstorm and hail - Explosion - Riot and civil commotion - Vehicle damage - Falling aircraft - Smoke damage - Vandalism and malicious mischief - Glass breakage - Theft - Falling objects - Weight of ice, snow, sleet - Sudden and accidental tearing apart of heating or cooling systems or appliances - Water damage from rupture or overflow of a household appliance, plumbing, heating or cooling system - Freezing (water pipes, etc.) - Damage from electrical currents (except to tubes, transistors or similar components) - Volcanic eruption. Obviously, you need federal flood insurance, optional earthquake insurance and danged good surge protectors.

Steve and Susan bought the lot next to Ray and June's. It was in an exclusive residential neighborhood that was gated on the west side of Las Vegas. Ray made Steve his partner in the business and they agreed to make good old George the General Foreman.

"I'm going to put in a basement," Ray announced.

"What for?" Steve asked.

"Bomb shelter," Ray chuckled.

"Right. Anyone ever tell you that the Cold War ended when they tore down the Berlin Wall?" Steve asked.

"It would make one hell of a recreation room," Ray countered. "Plus we need some place to store all of our survival supplies. Look, you're not single any more. We have families and responsibilities. I think Vegas will have a real building boom now that they're beginning to rebuild homes. That's why I made you a partner, Steve, we can both cash in big. You can build any kind of home you want so why not make it something very lasting?"

"Are June and you going to have children?" Steve asked.

"We're planning on a big family and I'm going to build a 5 bedroom house," Ray replied.

"Build two of everything and just make ours a mirror image of yours," Steve replied. "I don't have to fool around with this and living in a hotel is starting to get expensive."

“Hey George, he said yes,” Ray told George. “Mirror images, but identical. Connect them up while you’re at it. Let’s go to the office and I’ll show you the new housing development the bank agreed to fund.”

o

“It’s going to take a long time to construct 300 new homes,” Steve said, shaking his head.

“Call it job security, partner,” Ray laughed. “The homes will be upscale enough that we can really make out. I’ve owned that land for years, but I had to wait for the city to get that far west. I was planning on building in phases with about 50 homes per phase. I’ve already got a contractor clearing the area for phase I.”

“Let’s go look,” Steve suggested. “What types of home will we be building?”

“Elegantly appointed estate homes 2,489 to 4,216 square feet, priced from the mid \$600,000’s,” Ray replied. “The large home will be plan number 1642 and it will be a spacious two-story home that is wonderful for large families or guests. The home will feature 5-7 bedrooms, plenty of living space and a master suite with an inviting master retreat, optional fireplace and a double walk-in-closet. The library or guest suite will have an attached private bathroom and optional French door access to the front courtyard.”

“Tell me more,” Steve requested.

Elegant Interiors:

Soaring volume ceilings

Spacious media niches

Colonist 6 panel interior doors

Oak stair railings, to second floor

Hand-finished ceilings and walls with rounded corners

Upgraded 5” & 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ ” moldings (baseboards & casings)

Decorator ceramic tile entry, kitchen, laundry room, and all bathrooms

Pre-wired phone jacks in kitchen, family room, all bedrooms

Levered interior door handles

Fireplace at Family Room or Great Room

Plush carpet with rebond padding

Pre-wired for ceiling fan in Master Bedroom, Family room, and all secondary bedrooms

Pre-wired cable jacks family room, all bedrooms, and flex area

Structured Wiring including Network Hub

Gourmet Kitchens:

Upgraded raised panel oak cabinetry with designer finish, concealed hinges, 40” uppers and 3” crown molding

Upgraded Kenmore 5 burner gas cooktop, Double Built-in ovens, microwave &

5 cycle dishwasher
Self-rimming double bowl sink
Garbage disposal
Separate water line to refrigerator space
Spacious pantry
Recessed kitchen and nook lighting
Designer kitchen islands
Decorator granite countertops with bull nose edge
3 Pendant Light Pre-wire at kitchen island

Special Bath Features:

Vitreous china bowls
Low maintenance fiberglass shower surrounds with decorative tile pattern
Pedestal sinks in powder rooms
Elongated toilet bowls
Cultured marble vanity tops with full bull nose edge
Mirrored medicine cabinet

Dramatic Master Suites:

Elegant master suites with sitting area
Spacious walk-in closets with
upgraded wire shelving system
Double entry doors
Spacious and luxurious baths
Upgraded Delta chrome & brass faucets
Glass doors in master bath shower
Elegant ceramic tile shower surround
Jacuzzi brand garden tub Corner soaking tub, Double sinks with full width mirrors, 36"
high vanities
Private commodes
Mirrored medicine cabinet with beveled edge
Decorator granite countertops with full bull nose edge

Magnificent Exteriors:

Decorative, energy efficient exteriors with contrasting texture pop-outs
Exceptional architectural elevations with cultured stone veneer and 7 designer color
schemes
Steel cable post tension concrete foundation
Embossed steel weather resistant roll up sectional Garage door
Illuminated address panel
Single 8' entry door with sidelight

Energy efficient concrete tile roof for lasting beauty and low maintenance
Block fencing returns with walk-in gate
Finished garages with interiors textured and painted
Choice of architecturally designed front yard landscaping packages

3 exterior coach lights

Energy Saving Features:

Mechanically engineered sealed duct system for consistent air distribution
Oversized energy efficient low "E" vinyl windows
Two Lennox energy efficient zoned cooling and gas heating systems
Ground-mounted A/C condensers - 13 S.E.E.R.
75-gallon quick recovery gas water heater
Honeywell Programmable Thermostat
Two hose bibs
Laundry room plumbed for gas dryer
Cocoon™ insulation with R-17 rated wall system
R-30 rated insulation in ceilings
Water saving plumbing fixtures

Additional Features:

Standard 3-car garages,
Standard garage door opener (two car garage door)
Flexible room options
Transom windows above doors
Fiberglass French exterior doors thermal rated with 20-year warranty
Soft Water Loop
Hot water recirculation pump
Gas BBQ stub out
Custom recess lights in multiple living areas with dimmers
Protective smoke detectors
Decorator rocker switches
GFI electrical outlets (front and rear)
2-10 year Home Buyers Warranty
Pre-wired for security system
Standard laundry sink with base cabinets and laminate countertop

Community Features:

Prestigious entry monument & gated community
Enclosed rear yard with block walls & wrought iron gates
Elegant Paver stone driveways
Private Streets

"That's the fanciest house in the development?" Steve asked.

"Not exactly, partner," Ray laughed, "I decided to describe the new homes you and I are building."

Title 18 – Chapter 7 – The Russian Mafia

“That sounds like a million dollar home,” Steve said.

“You’ll be able to afford it,” Ray replied. “Now, imagine a home like that built on top of a huge basement with high ceilings and lots of storage space. We’ll put in backup generators and propane fuel tanks that are large enough to power the homes for at least a year. We can run the house with natural gas and only use the propane for the basement.”

“What about sewage?” Steve asked.

“I was figuring on a large holding tank and a sewage pump to pump it into the city sewer,” Ray explained.

“Water?” Steve continued.

“Common well, partner, with large storage tanks for both homes,” Ray replied.

“The last time I did the survival thing on the cheap,” Steve pointed out.

“So, sell me Susan and I’ll build her a separate home,” Ray said.

“I wouldn’t sell her for a million dollars,” Steve snapped.

“And that was exactly my point,” Ray replied.

“Oh.”

◦

There are volcanoes all over the world. La Palma is a stratovolcano, and is the largest of the western Canary Islands. It stretches 21,320’ (6500 m) above the surrounding ocean floor. Two main rock layers separated by a line about 1,400’ (427 m) above sea level make up La Palma. The lower layer is made of pillow lavas cut by basaltic dikes. The thickness of the pillow lavas range from 33 to 1150 ft (10 to 350 m). Most of the dikes are located within ~2 miles (3 km) of the west coast. The upper layer consists of basaltic lavas and pyroclastic rocks. Small alkalic domes have pushed their way into this area. Strong erosion of the island over time is shown by hundreds of meters of gravel mixed in with basaltic lava flows. The oldest volcanic rocks on La Palma are about 3-4 million years of age.

La Palma has seven historic eruptions, the most recent in 1971 from the Teneguia vent. Other vents formed in historic time include Tahuya, a cone of lapilli, scoria and bombs about 3,000’ tall (1,000 m) tall that formed over a three month period in 1585 by Strombolian eruptions and San Martin, a cone and crater that formed over two and a half

months in 1646. The eruption at San Martin produced large amounts of lapilli and also sent four lava flows down to the ocean. Recent craters and eruptive vents are located along a central line. A large canyon drains the Calderas to the southwest.

There is a simplified map showing the geology of La Palma on the Internet. The thick gray dashed line showed the location of a rift zone proposed by Carracedo (1994). Taburiente and Cumbre Nueva are Calderas. The landward scarps of these Calderas may mark the headwalls of giant landslides.

During the year 2005, the national Geographic Channel carried a program about Mega-Tsunamis. The next likely mega-tsunami was believed to originate in the Canary Islands. They made the statement that it was a matter of when, not if. Carracedo predicted a major landslide that would allow ½ billion tons of rock to slide into the Atlantic. Were this to happen, tests showed that it would generate a tsunami 600 meters high, 40 kilometers wide and hundreds of kilometers long. When, not if; just like Yellowstone and the Long Valley Caldera in that regard. A British scientist said that if he lived in Miami or New York City he'd keep one ear on the news. It would take the wave 8 hours to reach North America from the Canary Islands, plenty of time to run, presuming you were prepared and had your own jet plane.

*All my bags are packed, I'm ready to go,
I'm standing here outside the door
I hate to wake you up to say goodbye.
But the dawn is breakin', it's early morn',
The Taxi's waitin', he's blowin' his horn.
Already I'm so lonesome I could die.*

*So kiss me and smile for me,
Tell me that you'll wait for me,
Hold me like you never let me go.
'Cause I'm leaving on a jet plane,
Don't know when I'll be back again.
Oh babe, I hate to go.*

I can tell that it's just eating you alive. What tsunami? I'm sure you hate it, where are you going? Vegas? 600 meters is about 2,000', in the ocean, before it makes landfall. That ought to take care of the drought conditions, in the Midwest.

o

"June's pregnant," Susan said.

"Son of a gun," Steve said, "I didn't know he had it in him."

"He didn't," Susan laughed (a little professional humor). "I'm pregnant, too."

“Again?” Steve asked.

“It wasn’t me that built a 5-7 bedroom home, but I’m doing what I can to fill it,” Susan replied. “Besides the two of you are rolling in money now that phase I is sold out and phase II is under construction.”

“No bad for my first year as a partner, huh?” Steve replied. “Our new home is all paid off.”

“When are you going to show me the recreation room?” Susan asked. “And just what kind of recreation goes on down there anyway?”

“With which one, the blonde, the brunette or the redhead?” Steve asked.

“Did you get it on tape?” Susan asked (two can play that game).

“Sorry, poor lighting,” Steve replied.

“Well, show me this basement,” Susan insisted. “You spend enough time down there to really have a blonde, brunette and a redhead.”

“Ok, honey, I’ll tell them to get lost,” Steve teased.

“Knock it off unless you want to hear about some of my clients,” Susan said.

Steve stopped; no man wants to be compared. They went into the courtyard and down the ramp into the basement.

“Pretty fancy,” Susan said.

“That’s the bathroom and over there are the bedrooms,” Steve pointed. “That door leads to the storage room and it takes up about half of the basement.”

“What’s in the storage room?” Susan asked.

“There is a utility room for the generator and a laundry room,” Steve replied. “My large gun safe is in there and the rest of the space is taken up with stored everything. I put in a second freezer and I transferred the meat from that freezer to the one upstairs. I put in 3 1-year deluxe supplies of food from Walton Feed and 3 years of the Mountain House deluxe storage units. I guess that I’d better add another year of each if you’re expecting.”

“Does the Mountain House stuff store for very long?” Susan asked.

“20-30 years,” Steve replied.

"Is it hard to cook?" she asked.

"Just add water, Susan," he replied.

"Does it take a lot of storage space?" she continued.

"It stores in an area just 4'x6' and 18" deep," he replied.

"So, you would have room for plenty?" Susan asked.

"10-years for one person," Steve replied.

"Or, 2 years for 5 people," Susan laughed. "The doctor heard 2 heartbeats."

"Really?"

"Right, what do you want this time?" Susan asked.

"A German Sheppard and a Doberman Pincher," Steve replied. "Do you have any idea how much that Mountain House food costs?"

"Ray always says that if you have to ask, you can't afford it," Susan replied.

"What else does Ray always say?" Steve kidded.

"About my boobs or my ass?" Susan smiled.

Personally I'd have shut up a long time ago. Steve laughed and told Susan that he'd put in some baby food, disposable diapers and order more of the Mountain House Deluxe Storage Units. He went next door to see if Ray wanted any.

"What's going on between you and my wife?" Steve kidded.

"The same thing that going on between you and June," Ray smiled.

"She already did that one, huh?" Steve laughed.

"Partner, I can't out think that woman and I've tried just about everything," Ray replied.

"Susan wants me to order more Mountain House Foods, Ray. She says that the doctor heard 2 heartbeats and suggested that I put in enough food for 5 people for 2 years."

"Order the same for me," Ray replied, "Our doctor heard 3 heartbeats."

"And I thought that I had it bad," Steve said.

"We're going to get a housekeeper and a Nanny," Ray explained.

"Maybe we'd better do the same," Steve agreed.

"With the girls hiring them, you can bet they'll be old and ugly," Ray opined. "There is nothing more possessive than a reformed..."

"I get the idea," Steve said.

"I'm going to order ammo from Black Hills for the M1A," Ray said. "How much should I get for you?"

"Whatever, just double your order," Steve replied.

"I had a chance the other day to pick up some M16A4 rifles," Ray reported.

"What's the difference?" Steve asked.

"An A4 is basically an A3 upper on an A2 lower," Ray replied. "It has a removable handle and 3 rounds burst."

"Yeah, why not," Steve said.

"How many?" Ray asked.

"Same answer, Ray. Get me as many as you're getting for yourself," Steve replied.

"Well, ok," Ray replied. "You want ammo?"

"Sure."

"Suppressors?"

"Huh?"

"Surefire bought out a suppressor for the M16/M4 rifle with fast attach mounts," Ray explained.

"Are these rifles on or off the books?" Steve asked.

"Hotter than a \$3 pistol," Ray replied. "Off. Way off."

"I sort of figure the government owes me one," Steve said. "Go for it."

"Since we're both getting the same thing, I'll pay for them from the business," Ray explained. "What's wrong, you seem to be distracted?"

“I’ll be 65 by the time the kids are out of high school,” Steve replied.

“Well, I’ll be 70, so what?” Ray asked.

“So nothing, Ray,” Steve replied. “I was just thinking that before I met you I didn’t have a pot to pee in or a window to throw it out of.”

“And now you’re worth a million?” Ray asked. “And you did it on an assumed identity?”

“What’s with you and 4 identities?” Steve asked. “Isn’t 2 enough?”

“What if I told you it was like eating peanuts and when I got started I couldn’t stop?” Ray asked.

“You don’t really have to tell me anything,” Steve replied.

“Good, let’s leave it that way.”

◦

“Last year too many people were denied their right to vote, too many who tried to vote were intimidated,” the Massachusetts senator said at an event sponsored by the state League of Women Voters.

“There is no magic wand. No one person is going to stand up and suddenly say it’s going to change tomorrow. You have to do that,” he said.

I wonder if the grapes would have been sour if he’d have won the election? The Republicans weren’t any better:

“My party is going to have to decide whether we are going to continue to make excuses for Tom to the detriment of Republicans seeking election,” Shays said.

Rick Santorum, the No. 3 Republican in the Senate, said Sunday that DeLay needs to explain his conduct to the public.

No he doesn’t. Nobody gives a crap. He’s a politician; that’s a synonym for crook, regardless of what Richard Nixon said.

Arnold has to conduct public business in a tent on the lawn because there’s no smoking in public buildings and he likes cigars. Cripes.

US citizens living abroad should be aware that on March 23, 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed Marburg virus (family Filoviridae, which includes Ebola virus) as the causative agent of an outbreak of viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) in Uige

Province in northern Angola. Testing conducted by CDC's Special Pathogens Branch identified the virus in 9 of 12 specimens from patients who died during the outbreak. According to WHO reports, a total of 140 cases (with 132 deaths) were identified during October 1, 2004–April 1, 2005. Approximately 75% of the reported cases occurred in children younger than 5 years of age; cases also have occurred in adults, including health-care workers. Predominant symptoms have included fever, hemorrhage (bleeding), vomiting, cough, diarrhea, and jaundice (yellow skin and eyes). $132 \div 140 = 94\%$

Currently, there is no known SARS transmission anywhere in the world. The most recent human cases of SARS-CoV infection were reported in China in April 2004 in an outbreak resulting from laboratory-acquired infections. CDC and its partners, including the World Health Organization, continue to monitor the SARS situation globally. Any new updates on disease transmission and SARS preparedness activities will be posted at this site.

I'd rather have SARS than Ebola, wouldn't you? Just asking.

◦

I guess we didn't have to worry about Long Valley for another 600,000 years. What about Yellowstone and the Cascade Range? What about La Palma? Mt. St. Helens had been going rumble, rumble ever since 2004. Lassen Peak was still doing its thing; the eruption did nothing to slow it down. Mt. Spurr had been experiencing a volcano swarm since 2004. The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes was now the Valley of 9,999 Smokes with Arnold in Sacramento. That fault line over by Sumatra was very restless. BTW, *Krakatoa, East of Java* (1969) got it wrong, because Krakatoa is West of Java. And, it was June, Tornado and Hurricane seasons.

Let's talk about the house some more. Two-stories, 5-7 bedrooms, Library, 4½ baths, 4,216 square feet. It had a balcony off the upstairs Master Bedroom/Master Retreat with a fireplace/media center. There was a service room for the washer and dryer plus a deep sink. The upstairs had a bonus room. And, the exterior was finished off with a walled in courtyard. The upright freezer sat right outside of the kitchen door in the 3-car garage. Hell, it even had a grand staircase. A single guy would have enough bedrooms to stock them with a blonde, a brunette and a redhead. He'd probably die of old age at 32.

◦

The Krakatau volcanic complex is situated approximately 140 km from the Java trench in the southwest, whereas the Benioff zone is approximately at a depth of 120 km beneath it (Zen, 1983). Zen (1983) stated that the Sumatra fault zone did not extend into Java through Krakatau, but Sunda Strait was a key region between the Sumatra trench oblique subduction and the Java frontal subduction, and the Krakatau volcanic complex lies at the intersection of two graben zones and the north-south trending fracture zone. A significant volcanic lineament in Sunda strait is the one which coincides with Panaitan

island, Anak Krakatau, Rakata, Sebesi, Sebuku and Rajabasa volcanoes, it continuous until the Sukadana basalt area of east Lampung.

Krakatau (Krakatoa) volcano was located on the island of Rakata, 40 km off the west coast of Java. Since early historic ages, violent volcanic activity has been known to exist in the region. The “great eruption” of Krakatau must have taken place around 416 AD, as reported in ancient Javanese scriptures. The eruption formed three Islands (Rakata, Panjang, and Sertung), and caused a 7 km long Caldera (cavity) to form underneath Rakata. When Krakatau erupted again in 1883, the island virtually collapsed into its cavity, 300 m below sea level. So violent was the eruption that volcanic ash and debris reached as far west as Madagascar. Tidal waves resulted in the destruction of more than 150 villages, and were felt in France and England. In Australia, hundreds of kilometers away from the site, the explosion was heard. Since the disappearance of Krakatau, smaller eruptions have been observed. The ocean floor has been since gradually rising, eventually giving birth in 1927 to a new island, north of what remains of Rakata. Today, Anak Krakatau (Son of Krakatau) rises more than 150 m above sea level and is two km in diameter.

o

By most peoples standards it was just another car chase. Southern California seemed to have them every day. This one was different; the guys in the car gave the cops the slip. Blame that on the other car chases that had resulted in accidents forcing the authorities to back off. These guys had a nuclear weapon in the car. It was one of those Russian nukes that hadn't been stolen and hadn't been sold to the highest bidder. The 4 men were members of the east coast gang known as the Russian Mafia. You'd find most of them at New York's Brighton Beach – home to around 40,000 émigrés – apparently their main stronghold outside of Russia, not in Los Angeles.

There are two very high profile enterprises outside of the old Soviet Union, however, that the Organyzatsia are commonly associated with; – prostitution (with lucrative operations in Frankfurt, Helsinki and Hong Kong – utilizing young Russian immigrants), and, more worryingly, arms dealing. The Organyzatsia often find themselves with access to a cheap and seemingly endless supplies of high-quality military weaponry; a legacy of the partial dismantling of the Soviet army. The Organyzatsia have supplied terrorists, organized crime and even small countries with Red Army surplus – with everything ranging from anti-aircraft missiles to AK-47 assault rifles. In recent years, the media and law-enforcement agencies worldwide have been captivated by the possibility that the Russian Mafia might be able to provide buyers with nuclear weaponry, or weapons grade nuclear material. Initially, fears proved unfounded – there have indeed been seizures of radioactive material – but most turned out to be cons and frauds, some involving nothing more sinister than radioactive soil from Chernobyl. In the last few years, however, there has been a considerable ‘quality-leap’; with genuine plutonium being seized for the first time. For activities like this, it seems that Germany has emerged as the Organyzatsia's main ‘shop-window’ for illegal arms sales – most seizures involving them have been made in Germany.

The 4 men were simply making a delivery to a group in Los Angeles and the driver blew a boulevard stop sign. It shouldn't have been a big deal, but old Boris had a little grass and coke and he didn't think the cops would miss it. So, he ran and the cops eventually gave up the chase somewhere in the Inland Empire. They called the customer who told them to make the delivery in Baker, California. They ended up in Bakersfield, not Baker. The guys called their contact and he asked them if they could find Las Vegas, Nevada. It was the place with all of the neon signs. They said to give them a day in case they got lost. The contact told them to look for a red Hummer in the parking lot of Circus-Circus in exactly 24-hours.

They were early; it only takes 5 hours or so to get from Bakersfield to Las Vegas because it's only 287 miles. Most of Nevada is in the Pacific Time zone, the same as California. They thought they changed time zones when they entered Nevada and set their watches accordingly. Funny, they never seemed this inept on Law and Order. They parked their car in the Circus-Circus parking lot and got a room. Exactly 24-hours later, according to their watches, they were driving up and down the parking lot at Circus-Circus looking for a red Hummer.

The small trunk that held the various components of the assembled nuke was rigged to prevent unauthorized entry. You had to open the left latch and wait ten seconds before opening the right latch. If you rushed the process, the weapon self-destructed. If you waited, a timer ran off ten seconds and opened a relay circuit rendering the weapon more or less harmless (mostly less). Since they set their watches ahead 1 hour, they were early. They'd used up the coke and grass the night before so if the cops stopped them, they would be able to stop instead of running.

So what if they were early, they'd just drive around until the red Hummer showed up. Except, of course, they didn't know they were early and that Circus-Circus monitored the parking lot, keeping an eye out for thieves. You could always spot the thieves; they went up and down the rows looking for unlocked cars they could ransack. Sometimes the thieves were on foot and sometimes they used a vehicle.

"That car has been up and down the parking lot about 4 times now," the security man told his companion.

"I'll call LVPD and have them checkout the vehicle," the other officer said. "That's the third one today."

The LVPD officers tapped their horn and the vehicle pulled over. 4 men got out of the vehicle and stood alongside. Outnumbered, the officers called for backup and a Sergeant. They waited in the car for the backup unit to arrive and told the guys over their loudspeaker to remain where they were. Boris, et al., did exactly what they were told to do but the longer they waited the more nervous they became. They saw a red Hummer pull into the parking lot and stop. The driver gave them the once over, saw the police

car and departed. About then 2 more police cars pulled in, another patrol car and the Sergeant.

“Driver’s license and insurance,” the officer said.

“Sure,” Boris said and pulled out his wallet. Boris had an accent so thick you could cut it with a knife.

“So, tell me Boris,” the officer said when he heard the heavy accent, “What are you fel-las doing driving up and down the parking lot?”

“We were looking for friend,” Boris said. “We were supposed to meet them here at 4 o’clock.”

“You’re early,” the officer said, “It is only 3:45. We’d better look in your truck, would you open it please?”

“My trunk is in the trunk,” Boris said opening the trunk of the vehicle.

“Cute. What’s in the trunk Boris?” the officer asked. “More of the marijuana I smell?”

“No, is just my personal possessions,” Boris replied.

“Open it up,” the officer said.

“No. You get warrant, you have no probable cause,” Boris replied.

“What’s the problem?” the Sergeant asked walking up.

“Boris here doesn’t want to open the trunk in his trunk,” the officer explained. “He says that we have no probable cause and that we need a search warrant.”

“Is so,” Boris added. “Get search warrant or go away. We just looking for friend. What is this, police brutality?”

Rule Four: Never piss a cop off.

“Oh, so Boris is a legal expert,” the Sergeant said. “Ok Boris have it your way, we’ll get the warrant. Cuff ‘em.”

“This is Sergeant Jamison. I need a search warrant at the Circus-Circus parking lot to search an out-of-state vehicle for possible drugs. The license number is 234PSU,” Sergeant Don Jamison radioed.

“10-4. There’s a California want on the vehicle for a boulevard stop, speeding and felony evasion.”

“10-4. Roll transport.”

“10-4.”

“What’s in the trunk Boris that you don’t want us to see?” Jamison asked.

“I tell you, is just personal possessions,” Boris replied. Boris was doing all of the talking because Boris was the only one of the 4 men who spoke more than 6 words of English. Like I said, they were never this inept on Law and Order.

Thirty minutes later a squad car showed up with a search warrant. Boris was starting to sweat and it wasn’t from the sun. The Sergeant served the search warrant by stuffing it in Boris’s pocket and an officer reached to open the trunk.

“No wait, I tell you,” Boris said. “Is atom bomb. Trunk wired to prevent opening. You open, go kablooeey. I open for you.”

“Yeah right, an atom bomb,” Jamison laughed. “It’s probably 25 keys of coke. Open it.”

“No, wa...” Boris said.

BOOM!

Rule Five: The next time a Russian in the Parking Lot at Circus-Circus says he has an atom bomb in the trunk in his trunk – believe him.

Title 18 – Chapter 8 – The Next Disaster

An armed society is a polite society. Manners are good when one may have to back up his acts with his life. and A society that gets rid of all its troublemakers goes downhill.
Robert A. Heinlein

The two families were having a barbeque in Steve and Susan's back yard when the bomb went off. The wives were the sizes of barns and they were due any day. A one-kiloton bomb isn't the biggest bomb they make. The smallest bomb ever made was the 0.1kt bomb for the Davy Crockett. The Russian suitcase nukes were estimated to be about 1.0kt.

Estimated Exposures and Thyroid Doses Received by the American People from ^{131}I in Fallout Following Nevada Atmospheric Nuclear Bomb Tests:

In 1982, the U.S. Congress asked the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to assess to what extent the American population had been exposed to radioactive Iodine 131 from atmospheric nuclear weapons testing conducted in the 1950s and 1960s. As a result of public pressure the NCI issued a first report. This happened fifteen years after the study had been requested.

On the following pages we provide a visual link between pictures of atmospheric tests, and maps depicting the path the radioactive clouds traveled over the United States, the fallout they deposited and the average amount of radioactivity thyroids were exposed to. The exposure maps are given as average dose among all residents in a given county.

Note, however, that exposures for children under five were three to seven times the average, since almost all exposure was from ingested milk (cows eat contaminated feed, and concentrate the ^{131}I in milk). Some children drink much more milk than average, so they could be getting, say, nine to 21 times the average exposure; and some farm children drink unprocessed, fresher milk, so they could be ingesting far more of the short-lived isotope ^{131}I , which has a half-life of eight days, than those getting milk processed commercially. Finally, a few may be drinking goat's milk, with much higher concentrations of ^{131}I than cow's milk.

While the use of average intake is both meaningless and misleading the red and hot spots in the maps do nevertheless convey a clear message of danger that was brought onto the American people by its elected officials.

The blast radius increases as the cube root of the yield. A one kiloton enhanced radiation warhead can deliver an instantaneous lethal dose of 8000 Rads over a radius of 690m (2,260 ft) while the blast radius would be limited to approximately 550m (1,800 ft). In contrast a regular 10kt nuclear device would have the same lethal radiation radius but a blast radius of 1220m (4,000 ft). The W70 Mod 3 enhanced radiation warhead (neutron bomb) has a selectable yield of 0.8 or 1.6kt. This warhead can be used on the Lance battlefield nuclear missile.

This bomb wasn't an enhanced anything. It was just your average Russian 1kt suitcase nuke. You know, the ones the Russians denied having and weren't missing any of. The blast radius wasn't THAT big. It wiped out some of downtown Las Vegas. The blast front very slightly damaged, but didn't destroy, their homes because they were 50km from Circus-Circus. They were down in those basements in the blink of an eye. The mushroom cloud was beginning to rise over downtown and you didn't have to be a rocket scientist to know that TSHTF.

The first thing they did was seal the basement and the second thing they did was to turn on the CD V-717 Survey Meters. Then, Ray and Steve poured themselves about 3 fingers of bourbon. They didn't need to explain to June and Susan what had just happened. Everyone knew what a mushroom shaped cloud and a very, very large boom meant.

NORAD notified the White House and the new President that they had detected a nuclear explosion in Las Vegas. The President advanced the DEFCON to DEFCON 1. DHS simultaneously advanced the Threat Level to Red. It was all pointless of course; there was only the one Russian nuke in the country. The other 3 were still on the container ships somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. The Secret Service loaded the President and the first family aboard Marine-One and delivered them to Mt. Weather.

Nobody in the country, except some folks in New York's Brighton Beach, had any idea what was going on. But the LVPD had the license plate number. Except that the LVPD was terribly occupied at the moment, just trying to survive the nuclear detonation. Nobody would have known anything had not a rather creative dispatcher forwarded a message to DHS, before the detonation.

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That conversation about the M16A4's and the Mountain House foods had taken place about 8 months earlier. Oh, yes, our men were very well prepared. And you just had to know that good old George had been invited to attend the barbeque. He brought a case of Beck's beer. You didn't take a case of Bud to a barbeque in the backyard of the bosses' million dollar homes in the gated community. George was already on his fourth beer since entering the shelter and was reaching for number five. The distance had absorbed the gamma radiation; gamma rays are similar to x-rays, they are a form of electromagnetic radiation. Gamma rays are the most hazardous type of external radiation as they can travel up to a mile in open air and penetrate all types of materials. Since gamma rays penetrate more deeply through the body than alpha or beta particles, all tissues and organs can be damaged by sources from outside of the body. Only sufficiently dense shielding and/or distance from gamma ray emitting radioactive material can provide protection. Still, the excitement put both women into labor a couple of weeks early. This wasn't something they really covered in the Red Cross First Aid class either. Those flimsy little CPR cards weren't doing them one bit of good.

“Did you every deliver a baby?” Ray asked.

“I didn’t even go into the delivery room when Susan had Stephen,” Steve answered.

“We should be experts by the time this is over,” Ray laughed.

“The only thing that I know is that you’re supposed to tie off the umbilical cord,” Steve continued. “We have a roll of white butcher’s twine, it ought to work for that.”

“We could call an ambulance,” Ray suggested.

“The phones are dead and do you really want to go outside?” Steve asked.

“It wouldn’t be my first choice, no,” Ray replied.

“I have a Special Forces medical handbook,” Steve said. “I think you and I had better get to reading very quickly.”

“I have one too,” Ray pointed out, “I’ll get it. Hey George, did you ever deliver a baby?”

“I’ve never even been married, sorry,” George replied.

“He’s too stewed to help anyway,” Steve pointed out.

“Those 3 fingers of bourbon didn’t do me a hell of a lot of good,” Ray laughed. “Do you have cribs?”

“The cribs are in the storage rooms,” Steve explained. “Man I’ve got everything we need, except experience delivering babies.”

Susan had purchased June 3 cribs as shower presents for June and June had purchased 2 for Susan because Stephen was still in his crib. Relax, fellas. Women have been having babies for a while now. Squaws used to just go off by themselves and squat down and deliver the baby. It really can’t be that hard. Let’s face facts, there has to be the first time people do anything. They both got a magic marker to number the children as they were delivered. They’d worry about names later. A few hours later it was all over and Ray and Steve were now veterans. Susan had a boy and a girl and June had a boy and 2 girls. The names were #1H, #2H, #1M, #2M and #3M. The babies were washed down, powdered, diapered and wrapped in blankets. They emptied drawers from the bureaus and used them as cribs until they got the new cribs assembled.

The generators had kicked in so that meant that Las Vegas had lost power. Nothing like starting out 2 weeks in a shelter with 5 brand new crying babies. The Nannies and the Housekeepers all had the day off on top of everything else. Thank God for Similac and Enfamil, June didn’t have enough spigots. Thank God George came to the party; they

had more babies than people to hold them. Now all they had to do was assemble 5 cribs and wait a couple of weeks.

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“If we hadn’t built these shelters none of this would have happened,” Steve said. “Build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door.”

“If we hadn’t built the shelters we’d be glowing in the dark,” Ray countered. “What do you suppose happened back in town?”

“How should I know?” Steve responded. “It wasn’t a very big explosion so maybe the Russians really do have suitcase nukes.”

“Terrorists?” Ray suggested.

“Probably, who knows?” Steve shook his head. “Does it really make any difference?”

Hey kids, you’ll always remember your birthdays. That’s the day terrorists exploded a nuke on the strip. The only thing was that the government had traced the license plate and it went back to Brighton Beach, home of the Russian Mafia. They went to Brighton Beach and the Russians lawyered up. Ivan and Sergi didn’t know anything, according to their lawyers. Boris? It is a common name so it could be anyone. Most of the Russian Mafia members weren’t even Russians. They came from the countries Russia had absorbed to form the old Soviet Union. Most of them are, in fact, Jewish and they have strong ties with the country of Israel.

A couple of weeks later the CD V-717’s weren’t registering any radiation and Steve, Ray and George left the shelters. Nothing looked to be out of the ordinary because the bomb was so small and they were about 50 clicks away from the site of the blast. There were soldiers everywhere; all MOPPED up (level 4) in the hot Vegas sun conducting house-to-house searches. The soldiers were all carrying those Flash Gordon Ray guns, the M8s. They had all the food you needed as long as it was MRE’s. Yeah, we have a total of 11 people; let us have a few of cases.

Ray’s business was outside of the blast radius and it survived. Most of their equipment was at the phase II project anyway. The Nannies and Housekeepers had gotten together and spent the day at Lake Meade and they came through ok. This wasn’t World War III; it was just 4 Russians and a car bomb. It didn’t even wipe out the entire Strip. The Strip is over 5 miles long, you know.

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The nuclear detonation in Las Vegas was a blip on the radar screen, nothing more. The military was down to DEFCON 4 and the President and the first family was back in the White House. The FBI had to let Ivan and Sergi go, they weren’t Americans they could

throw in prison for a couple of years for refusing to answer questions. The ships carrying the other devices docked and the containers were unloaded and hauled away. This time, Ivan and Sergi made the customers come to their warehouse in Jersey and pick up the unarmed devices. Everything was business as usual around the country. The growing season was even almost back to normal and the volcanic ash in the Midwest had been plowed into the existing soil and the yields had increased dramatically.

Over the two successive years, June and Susan each had 2 more babies and Ray and Steve went and saw the doctor. They each had a basketball team and enough was enough. They finished phase's II and III and were working on phase IV. 50 luxury homes a year was all the market could bear. 50 homes a year with a gross margin of \$50k-\$100k each wasn't hurting their bank accounts. They already had most of the phase IV homes sold and construction was only half completed.

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If you lived in southern California, for example, Mt. St. Helens blowing up in 1980 didn't really affect you very much. Neither did 9/11 in a physical sense. Even the Long Valley Caldera blowing up didn't affect most of the northern Californians. At best, you were inconvenienced and at worst, you lived in the wrong place and it didn't make a whole lot of difference because you were dead. How many died in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake? What about the Long Beach quake of 1933? Prince William Sound, Sylmar, Whittier Narrows, Landers, Northridge, Loma Prieta were all in the US. Between the years 1811 and 2002, the US experienced 18 earthquakes of magnitude 7.8 or higher. Most of them were in Alaska (11/18). The largest earthquakes in the World, 13, only include 3 of the Alaskan earthquakes. They ranged from 8.5 all the way up to the 9.5 that struck Chile in 1960. The 2 off the coast of Sumatra in 2004 and 2005 measured 9.0 and 8.7, respectively.

The largest US earthquake in terms of number of people killed was the 1906 quake that killed 500-3,000 people, estimates vary. The second largest quake was the April 1, 1946 quake in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska that killed 165. 80% of all the quakes in the US between 1974 and 2003 occurred in Alaska (57.2%) and California (23.2%). Hawaii came in a distant third at 7.3%. Only 8 states didn't have earthquakes during the period. Some of them had tornadoes or hurricanes instead. What was the worst natural disaster in US history? The hurricane that hit Galveston, TX on September 8, 1900, left an estimated 6,000-8,000 dead, mostly from devastation due to tidal surge. The worst disaster in the US, period, was the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic that killed over 500,000 people.

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So, did the eruption of Long Valley Caldera or the 1kt atom bomb in Las Vegas kill the second largest number of people in US history? Does it matter? According to the Discovery Channel the worst disaster in US history will come when Yellowstone blows its top. In the show they aired, 2,500km³ of ash was discharged by the 8-day eruption. And

the politicians? Totally predictable, they were worried about their image instead of the 300 million people they were supposed to protect. Am I being too hard on politicians? They're mostly lawyers, so what do you think? *If the glove doesn't fit, you have to acquit!* Right, you try putting on a pair of shrunken, skintight leather gloves wearing latex gloves on your hands. Even Geraldo is a lawyer – maybe that explains it. Nope, there was Joseph Pulitzer, Nellie Bly and Dan Rather.

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By the time they started phase V, they had stair-step children. Steve and Susan had children aged 4, 3(2), 2 and 1 and Ray and June had children aged 3(3), 2 and 1. They were using all 7 bedrooms, plus another, in the homes, having converted 3 extra rooms into bedrooms. Las Vegas had fallen on hard times. There were casinos all over the country and people must have figured they wouldn't find an atom bomb on the Res. People were still moving to Vegas from California in droves and the housing market was still in good shape. The men planned to retire when phase VI was completed.

There is more to life than just surviving; you have to make a living. Especially when you consider that the wives wanted a 2-year supply of Mountain House foods in the shelters for everyone including the Housekeeper and the Nanny. Steve hadn't asked Ray how many of the M16A4's he was getting and he was surprised to learn that they bought a half dozen apiece, a lifetime supply. There were lots of the M16's making their way to the market these days as semi-automatic rifles because of the M8s. Nevada was one of those states where you didn't have to look too hard to find any type of firearm you wanted. A lot of those M16's only had the sear changed out and no machining performed... a cost cutting move by the government.

The Democrats won reelection in 2012, but the House was still firmly Republican. Consequently nothing was being accomplished in Washington, as usual. The only laws that Congress seemed to pass these days were laws that took away more of the Rights in the Bill of Rights. The FBI had picked up a rumor that there 3 of the Russian suitcase nukes floating around the country somewhere, but they didn't have a clue about who had them. The rumor referred to the 3 nukes that had entered the country right after the Vegas incident. It didn't refer to the other 5 weapons that had come in later in other containers.

Scientists had issued an update to the Abrupt Climate Change scenario that had been published years earlier because the Gulf Stream was still slowing down but wasn't expected to submerge anytime soon. They'd had a 3rd earthquake over by Sumatra but the third one hadn't generated a tsunami either, just like the second one. For a change, the US wasn't fighting a war in a far off land pissing off the Muslims or anyone else. This is just an update because life was interesting but not very exciting in the second decade of the 21st Century. Nothing much had changed, people were still starving to death and dying from epidemics in Africa. Chinese population control wasn't working very well and India was erupting at the seams. Both Iran and North Korea had tested nuclear weapons and there were now 10 members of the nuclear community.

The gang situation in the US was totally out of control. Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) had spread out and could now be found in every major city. In an effort to control the gangs, California had passed even stricter firearms laws restricting the ownership of semi-automatic weapons to LEO's and members of the military. In Arizona the state finally had a State Defense Force made up of the people from the Minuteman Project. There had been several shootings at the California borders, which were customs ports, that California called Agricultural Inspection Stations. The latest fad seemed to be smuggling semi-automatic weapons into California. Yes Sir, America was a really nice place to raise a family in the second decade of the 21st Century.

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It wasn't surprising therefore when Congress decided that that had to do something to get the gang situation under control. It wasn't the first time the government had tried. Bobby Kennedy had taken on Jimmy Hoffa. Richard Nixon had created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). Established within the Office of the Attorney General, Department of Justice, by the Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-197) on September 22, 1965. Through the administration of grants and other programs, the OLEA sought to improve methods of law enforcement, court administration, and prison operations at state and local levels. The functions of the OLEA were transferred to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, established June 19, 1968, by Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. It was abolished due to a failure of appropriations, April 15, 1982.

We had wars on drugs, but those were always like Vietnam and we lost more than we won. A major taskforce was mounted in and around Florida to deal with the problem and it worked. It forced the drug dealers to start bringing their drugs in through Mexico and the west coast. Remember, alcohol is a drug, specifically a sedative-hypnotic drug.

Perhaps the earliest recorded example in the Old World is the prohibition of the use of alcohol under Islamic law (*Sharia*), which is usually attributed to passages in the Qur'an reportedly dating from the 7th century. Wrong!!! The Code of Hammurabi, created ca. 1700BC, also known as the Codex Hammurabi, is one of the earliest sets of laws found, and one of the best preserved examples of this type of document from ancient Mesopotamia. Here are the first written liquor (drug) laws from the Code of Hammurabi:

108. If a tavern-keeper (feminine) does not accept corn according to gross weight in payment of drink, but takes money, and the price of the drink is less than that of the corn, she shall be convicted and thrown into the water.

109. If conspirators meet in the house of a tavern-keeper, and these conspirators are not captured and delivered to the court, the tavern-keeper shall be put to death.

110. If a "sister of a god" open a tavern, or enter a tavern to drink, then shall this woman be burned to death.

111. If an innkeeper furnish sixty ka of usakani-drink to ... she shall receive fifty ka of corn at the harvest.

In some African countries the penalty for drunk driving is the DEATH penalty. Countries and territories, which retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes:

AFGHANISTAN, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, BAHAMAS, BAHRAIN, BANGLADESH, BARBADOS, BELARUS, BELIZE, BOTSWANA, BURUNDI, CAMEROON, CHAD, CHINA, COMOROS, CONGO (Democratic Republic), CUBA, DOMINICA, EGYPT, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, GABON, GHANA, GUATEMALA, GUINEA, GUYANA, INDIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, IRAQ, JAMAICA, JAPAN, JORDAN, KAZAKSTAN, KOREA (North), KOREA (South), KUWAIT, KYRGYZSTAN, LAOS, LEBANON, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, LIBYA, MALAWI, MALAYSIA, MONGOLIA, NIGERIA, OMAN, PAKISTAN, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY, PHILIPPINES, QATAR, RWANDA, SAINT CHRISTOPHER & NEVIS, SAINT LUCIA, SAINT VINCENT & GRENADINES, SAUDI ARABIA, SIERRA LEONE, SINGAPORE, SOMALIA, SUDAN, SWAZILAND, SYRIA, TAIWAN, TAJIKISTAN, TANZANIA, THAILAND, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, UGANDA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, UZBEKISTAN, VIET NAM, YEMEN, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE

Anybody seen any let up in the flow of drugs into the country? Me neither. Of course, if those gangsters didn't have all of those guns, the cops would be able to control crime and win the war on drugs. When the NRA made the statement, "When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns," they weren't talking about guys like Steve and Ray or you and me. They were talking about guys like MS-13. Most of their weapons were illegal from the get-go, regardless of which city they lived in. China has it right: "We have seen an annual spree of executions in China in the run-up to UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in previous years" said Amnesty International. "Yet no convincing evidence has ever been produced that the death penalty deters would-be traffickers and users more effectively than any other punishment."

Try and explain about outlaws and guns to Sarah Brady or to Teddy Kennedy. No, they'd tell you this wasn't the 1700's and we weren't trying to secure our freedom from a tyrant. Only the police needed weapons these days and if it were up to them, they'd only let them have 12-gauge shotguns with beanbag ammunition. Say, did you read the story about the guy who died last week after being shot by a beanbag? They call it 'less-lethal' not 'non-lethal' ammunition.

COLUMBUS, Georgia (AP) – A man who telephoned a hot line to say he had a gun and was dreaming of killing children died after police shot him with supposedly non-lethal beanbag projectiles, officials said.

Lester Zachary died Wednesday at a hospital, two days after he was shot at his home with two beanbag bullets.

Zachary, 45, died of internal bleeding caused by a bullet hitting his spleen area, Muscogee County Coroner James Dunnivant said Thursday.

What was the second worst disaster in the history of the United States of America? That happened during the 2nd decade of the 21st Century when several states including: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York totally outlawed guns except in the hands of the military and law enforcement officers (bet me it won't happen). It was the 2nd worst disaster because less than 500,000 people died as a result and the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 remained the worst. Who got elected in 2008 and reelected in 2012? The liberal Democrats are all the same, what difference does it make?

The states that banned guns gave their citizens 6 months to turn in their weapons. After that, the weapons would be seized and the owner arrested on a serious misdemeanor. In some states guns had to be registered and the owner had no choice with respect to their registered firearms. Very few firearms that weren't registered were getting turned in. The states seized dealers' records and went looking. Several owners immediately filed suit in federal court to get an injunction barring the use of the federally mandated records. They lost, appealed, lost again and the Supreme Court denied Cert., thereby vacating the stay order.

The NRA as Amicus Curiae filed another brief urging the Court to reconsider. Somehow it worked and the Court took the case. Their argument centered on the old occasional controversy over the comma in the 2nd Amendment. In this age of technology, it should be possible to determine whether or not the comma really belonged. The attorneys representing the plaintiffs had included the argument and the lower courts had shined it on, refusing to even review the evidence. This, it was argued, constituted the reversible error. In a move unheard of in the history of the court, the justices actually looked at the evidence.

It was like the traffic ticket back in the late 1930's that brought down the Justice of Peace courts in 39 states. In that case, the Court ruled the lower courts to be Unconstitutional because they made no provision for appeal. The Supreme Court is called the Court of Last Resort for a reason. The Supreme Court reversed and remanded, ordering the lower courts to consider the clear scientific evidence. The lower court ruled that the comma didn't belong and the case went back to the Supreme Court, which vacated ALL federal firearms laws and declared the laws in several states to be Unconstitutional. George Bush had packed the Supreme Court, never realizing the impact of his choices.

Congress got into the act and reenacted the NFA of 1934, this time requiring registration of all firearms at a fee of \$15. The law did not prevent anyone, except convicted felons or the mentally defective, from owning anything and there was only an instant background check and 3-day waiting period involved in the purchase of all firearms. The new law made possession of an unregistered firearm a felony punishable by a \$10,000 fine and 10-years in prison. The President claimed that the streets would run red with blood. Teddy Kennedy had a heart attack and died. Sarah Brady considered suicide but

didn't have the courage. Amnesty International was the first group to protest the new death penalties.

In a companion bill, the Congress legalized marijuana but increased the penalties for all other crimes related to drugs of abuse and made dealing a capital offense. Both bills passed Congress by a 75% margin, forcing the President to sign both bills into law. Cognizant that the states could foil the new legislation under the 10th Amendment, Congress tacked on a provision, which essentially said that federal grants and matching funds would be withheld from any state whose firearms laws were more restrictive than the federal law.

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"Are we going to register our weapons?" Steve asked.

"I think we can afford it," Ray replied. "It could be an attempt at a gun grab of major proportions but in view of the Supreme Court's decision, I think it's worth the risk. Apparently all we have to do is take the weapons to a dealer, have him record the serial numbers and pay \$15 per. There's no waiting period on firearms you already own."

It turned out to be \$30 per because the rifle and the suppressor were considered separately. Registration also included the instant background check and before the period for registration expired everyone in the country who could register his or her weapons did. Did I mention that use of a firearm in the commission of a felony was now a separate felony with a 25-year minimum sentence that could not run concurrent? Sorry. The bad guys were going to either have to do holdups with a knife or spend the remainder of their lives in prison. I can hear it now, *If it wasn't sharp, it won't cut and you'll have to acquit.* Rest in Peace, Johnny, and next time around be a schoolteacher or something else useful.

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The right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed? Note the word bear. It is a synonym of the word carry. The good news was Alaska didn't have to change its laws. The bad news was that most other states did. CCW's became a shall issue item and open carry could not be barred, except in certain circumstances like down in Arizona where an establishment could force you to check your firearms. The liberals of the world were having hissy fits and the crime rates started dropping. While the states couldn't regulate the firearms the way they wanted to, they most certainly could and did require safety classes and for people to qualify for use of the weapons on their CCW's. *Shall issue* doesn't necessarily allow for a haphazard affair.

The United States of America became a safer country for everyone except the criminals. It was mostly their blood running red in the streets, but not always. With nothing to lose if they were caught, the criminals began to eliminate witnesses. And that was why the second worst disaster in the US occurred when 8 states decided to outlaw guns. I

wonder what the country would be like if the Dram shop laws were changed to embrace those 4 provisions in the Code of Hammurabi.